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The Use of the Leadership Strategies of Vision, Communication of Culture, Trust, and Deployment of Self by School Superintendents in Selected Elementary Districts of Cook and Dupage Counties of Illinois

Edward F. Aksamit
Loyola University Chicago

THE USE OF THE LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES OF VISION, COMMUNICATION OF CULTURE, TRUST, AND DEPLOYMENT OF SELF BY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS IN SELECTED ELEMENTARY DISTRICTS OF COOK AND DUPAGE COUNTIES OF ILLINOIS

by

Edward F. Aksamit

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VITA

Edward F. Aksamit, son of Edward M. and Stephanie (Kosiek) Aksamit, was born in Chicago, Illinois on October 10, 1942.

The author's elementary and secondary education was obtained in the Chicago, Illinois public school system. He completed his secondary education at Kelly High School in Chicago, Illinois.

In June, 1964, Mr. Aksamit received his Bachelor of Science degree from Chicago Teachers College in Chicago, Illinois. His Master of Education degree was received from DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois, in June, 1968.

His teaching career began in September, 1964 at the Drexel School in Cicero, Illinois, where he taught mathematics and science to seventh and eighth grade students for four years. He assumed the position of assistant principal in 1968 and became a principal in 1970. Following nineteen years as a principal in the Cicero public schools, he became the assistant superintendent in 1989, the position he holds currently.

The author is married to the former Victoria Walsen and has one daughter, Amanda Rose.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CONTENTS OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the past several years, the use of corporate management techniques has become increasingly important to the school superintendent. This trend has been vividly demonstrated in the literature. From journal articles and magazines to professional and trade books, the use of corporate management strategies in educational administration has been emphasized. Authors have claimed that business techniques can address and solve current school problems, such as developing school culture, increasing accountability, and implementing strategic plans.[1]

Corporations, so dependent on a well-educated work force, are alarmed at the on-going crisis in education. Following five years of the most sustained school reform movement in United States history, it has become clear to some that our system of education is obsolete. It needs to become more relevant and function under entirely different operating assumptions. The recent emphasis in educational reform is based upon the concept that nothing is fundamentally wrong with the system. The majority of individuals believe that our schools can make the climb back to an imaginary past height of excellence if the existing educational structure is made more efficient with additional funding and tighter controls.[2]

Our problems, however, are much more varied. To maintain our current standard of living, "our schools must graduate the vast majority of their students with achievement levels long thought possible for only the privileged few", concludes

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[1]William Loose and Jack McManus, "Corporate Management Techniques in the Superintendent's Office," Thrust 16 (May/June, 1987):11.

[2]Ellen Graham, "ReTooling the Schools," The Wall Street Journal Report, 31 March 1989, p.R3.

a 1986 report by the Carnegie Forum, now known as the National Center in Education and the Economy.[3]

Corporate America has also had its share of difficulties. There is a belief among current writers that the emphasis advocated by today's researchers began in the late 1930's by Elton Mayo and Chester Barnard of Harvard University. Both challenged the ideas put forth by Max Weber, who defined the bureaucratic form of organization, and Frederich Taylor, who implied that management really can be made into an exact science. Weber favored bureaucracy with its rule-driven, impersonal form that he believed was the only way to ensure long term survival. Taylor, the father of efficiency, believed that if work could be divided into enough discrete, wholly programmed pieces with these pieces then put back together in a truly optimal manner, a top performing unit would emerge. This system, which is concerned with quantification and bottom-line results, is creating managers who lack a feeling for the "whole" of the organization. Managers are willing to study, analyze, and define problems. Their skills are steeped in specialization, standardization, efficiency and productivity. They use highly rational and analytical tactics. This emphasis on the tactical requirement of leadership, unfortunately, reflects the culture of Western society.[4] Tactics are defined as involving actions of less magnitude than those of strategy or as small scale actions serving a larger purpose. Examples of tactical skills are: 1) mastering and using various contingency leadership theories, 2) conflict management, 3) shared-decision making models, 4) team management principles, and 5) group process techniques.[5] These skills are

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[3]Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, Redesigning America's Schools (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1986), p. 10.

[4]Abraham Zaleznik "Managers and Leaders: Are They Different?" Harvard Business Review, 55 (May/June, 1977): 67.

[5]Thomas J. Sergiovanni "Ten Principles of Quality Leadership," Educational Leadership (February, 1982): 330.

situationally specific, of short duration, and are focused on objectives and outcomes. Leaders, to be successful, must possess these basic tactical skills. Results-oriented management is the slogan; the "bottom line" is worshipped and the in-control manager is admired. Faced with such demands, it is understandable that educational administrators and supervisors have stressed tactical requirements. However, to reach beyond routine competence and to promote growth of either a business or school district, leadership must shift its emphasis to long term quality schooling. Thinking, planning, and implementation is the working definition of strategy.[6]

In reviewing the literature and research, most of the studies emphasize investigation dealing with the tactical skills of the superintendent. A Ph.D. dissertation by Larry Lee Erion examined the leadership behavior of selected superintendents in the state of Iowa. The study sought the following: 1) to determine on which dimensions of management effectiveness exemplary superintendents differ from other superintendents, and 2) to determine if certain dimensions of management effectiveness contribute significantly to the prediction of a superintendent's overall effectiveness. The data were gathered through the use of two questionnaires. A significant difference was discovered between the exemplary and randomly selected superintendent groups on two dimensions of management effectiveness: 1) written communication and 2) personal motivation. Exemplary superintendents tended to cluster in larger school districts with large staffs. this resulted in fewer opportunities for extensive personal contact with all employees. As a result, greater reliance and importance was placed upon written communication. In like manner, exemplary superintendents' quest for a greater challenge and their pursuit of personal and professional

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[6]Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, In Search of Excellence (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1982), p.6.

growth led them to acquire additional training, pursue advanced degrees, and seek superintendencies in larger districts--all indicators of high personal motivation.[7]

Four dimensions that contributed to the overall effectiveness of a superintendent were: 1) judgment, 2) leadership, 3) organizational ability, and 4) stress tolerance. The conclusions reached in this study were based upon data that reflected tactical skills or successful "bottom-line" results. In-depth strategies were not investigated.[8]

Another dissertation by Turin had as its main purpose, the identification of school superintendent leadership behaviors that may account for the adoption of innovative management techniques. The research instrument was a questionnaire divided into three parts. Section One was developed by the investigator to obtain from the respondents, specific information relative to the desirability and degree of the use of innovative management techniques in their schools. In Section Two, "LEAD", an adapted version of Hershey and Blanchard's instrument was used. Respondents were asked to answer twelve situational questions relative to leadership behavior style adaptability. The third part of the questionnaire consisted of eight personal/professional demographic questions. From the data collected, participants were classified by the selected alternative actions they would choose when facing given situations. these alternate actions corresponded to four leadership behavior styles. The findings generated appeared to offer support for the hypothesis that the leadership behavior of superintendents who used certain management techniques (Linear programming, LOGOS, Key Result Management) did differ from that of

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[7]Larry Lee Erion, "Perceptions of the Leadership Behavior of Selected Iowa Superintendents" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Iowa State University, 1986) Dissertation Abstracts 47 (April 1986) 1130A.

[8]Ibid.

superintendents who did not use such techniques. As before, this study emphasized tactical skills that were specific and focused on outcomes. The strategic aspect of leadership style and innovative management technique was not covered. Purpose, goodness (worth), importance, thinking, planning, and implementation also were not studied.[9]

An intensive case study of a suburban superintendent by Daresh and Aplin was conducted to ascertain the effective fulfillment of the superintendent's role and how he reconciled the competing expectations of business management and educational leadership. Following the observation and interviewing of the superintendent, as well as, the interviewing of numerous individuals who were under his direction, further observations were conducted to determine how this individual produced a positive impact on the quality of education in his district. The most notable single method utilized was the establishment of an unmistakable set of "non-negotiable" improvement. These firm values influenced all decisions in the district. The focus of this study involved the discovery of a strategy or plan that resulted in a successful superintendency.[10]

BACKGROUND

The idea and inspiration for this study was formulated following the reading of the book, Leaders, by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus. The authors' belief was that leadership is the prime force behind successful organizations. This leadership creates vital and viable organizations and assists

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[9]Auguste Turin, "Leadership Behavior of School Superintendents As Related to Adoption and Adaption of Innovative Management Techniques in Selected Massachusetts School Systems" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation. University of Massachusetts, 1986), Dissertation Abstracts 47 (April, 1986) 1122A.

[10]John C. Daresh and Norita D. Aplin "Educational Leadership and the Suburban Superintendent," Education 107 (Summer 1987): 449.

them in developing a new vision. Leaders also mobilize the organization to change toward that vision.

Bennis and Nanus studied ninety leaders who gave their organizations basic purpose and direction. The methodology they incorporated was a combination of interviewing and observing. After continuous examination of their data, four major areas of competency emerged that the majority of leaders embodied:

STRATEGY I: Attention through vision
STRATEGY II: Meaning through communication
STRATEGY III: Trust through positioning
STRATEGY IV: Deployment of self[11]

The extent to which these strategies were utilized in our educational system was questioned. A review of the literature indicated that the strategies employed by the successful leaders of certain organizations could also be used by superintendents of school districts to meet the complex and challenging problems of today and tomorrow.

It is imperative that educational systems and those who lead them have a clear idea of what they are "all about". Naisbett suggests that businesses and school boards continually ask themselves the question "What business are we really in?".[12] Consideration of the question should lead to the development of strategies from which accomplishments could be measured. It would be necessary to develop long range plans (Strategy I) which could only be effectively accomplished if it was written in the context of a clearly defined mission statement or vision. A long range strategy, always a valuable tool, would become indispensable for all administrators in the 1990's.

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[11]Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1985), pp. 26-27.

[12]John Naisbett, Megatrends (New York: Warner Books, 1982), p. 65.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to analyze the use of effectiveness strategies by superintendents in the areas of vision, communication of culture, trust, and self-deployment. It is the investigator's belief that to revitalize education and ensure growth, leadership must foster a vision of what could be accomplished and move the organization toward that goal. The four strategies of effectiveness that provide the focus of this study are:

1. The superintendent's strategy in articulating a shared vision that moves the district toward a goal that will create a better organization.[13]
2. The superintendent's strategy in shaping the culture (social architecture) which enables members to know what is expected, what the values are, and what the philosophy encompasses.[14]
3. The superintendent's strategy for generating trust through accountability, predictability, and reliability.[15]
4. The superintendent's strategy of self-deployment or ability to capitalize on strengths and compensate for weaknesses.[16]

The problems of running a school system have presented many management and leadership challenges. Public school officials have tended to either overlook lessons learned by business organizations or have adopted popular trends, resulting in "educational fads" that have come and gone.

The focus of this study is the four strategies of effective leadership as defined by authors Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus. As the search process failed to discover one

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[13]Bennis and Nanus, p.89.
[14]Ibid., p.112.
[15]Ibid., p.43.
[16]Ibid., p.57.

accepted concept of leadership, so it was equally difficult to find one accepted definition of leadership that had proven to withstand the test of time. Warren Bennis noted that there are more than 350 definitions of leadership recorded in the literature.[17] The essence of leadership, as described by Bennis and Nanus, is captured in the following:

"Leadership can invent and create institutions that can empower employees to satisfy their needs. Leaders can, through deploying their talents choose purposes and visions that are based on the key values of the work force and create the culture that support them. It can move followers to high degrees of consciousness, such as liberty, freedom, justice, and self-actualization."[18]

PROCEDURE

The study began with a survey of the literature to determine the extent of findings and recommendations of the research related to Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus' four strategies of effective leadership. Results of the survey revealed that the majority of information related to this topic was centered upon the area of business administration. Therefore, this study applies successful strategy techniques of chief executive officers to superintendents of school districts. A complete review of related literature and research findings is included in Chapter II of this study.

The next step involved the determination of the districts to be included in the population of the study. The investigator identified the population to be elementary school districts located in the Illinois counties of Cook and DuPage. These two counties represented approximately 35% of all elementary districts within the state of Illinois. They also represented a wide variety of socio-economic levels.

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[17]Luvern L. Cunningham, "Leaders and Leadership: 1985 and Beyond", Phi Delta Kappan 67 (September, 1985): 17.
[18]Bennis and Nanus, p.218.

The northern boundary of the identified geographic area was Algonquin Road, which is 25 miles south of the Wisconsin state border. Lake Michigan and the Illinois-Indiana state line composed the eastern border for approximately 10 miles. The western boundary was located 35 miles from downtown Chicago, forming a vertical line beginning at Route 62 in northwest Cook County, continuing slightly east of the Fox River and ending several miles southeast of Aurora, Illinois. From Aurora, a diagonal line extending northeast to southwest for approximately thirty miles from downtown Chicago, formed the southern boundary. Within the two counties existed some of the largest and smallest, richest and poorest districts in the state of Illinois. This particular portion of the state offered the concentrated diversity necessary for the study.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) was contacted to provide the latest available information relative to the size and wealth of the elementary school districts to be studied. In January of 1990, the ISBE supplied figures from the 1988-1989 school year. It was upon these figures that the strata for comprising the districts were created. The Illinois State Board of Education, Department of Research and Statistics, provided a computer printout listing the 1988-89 average daily attendance figures, or ADA, for each district in the study. Based upon these figures, the districts were ranked according to their size, as determined by the ADA. The 148 districts ranged in size from an ADA of 14,000 to an ADA of below 100. The median was 1,050. Wealth was determined by an index, calculated through the use of two figures: 1) equalized assessed valuation per pupil (EAV), and 2) the total tax rate of the district. The Illinois State Board of Education, Department of School Finances supplied the sources that generated the figures for each district. A publication provided the total tax rate per district, while the most current equalized assessed valuation per pupil for 1988 was obtained through a

printout.[19] To determine a district's local wealth, the EAV was multiplied by the total tax rate. The wealth of the districts in the study ranged from a high of $7600 per pupil to a low of $600. The median was $3000 per pupil.

Stratified sampling was utilized to formulate the four strata. The basis for stratification was population (ADA) and local wealth. The advantage of using stratified sampling was the ability to determine the extent to which each stratum affected the total population represented in the sample. For purposes of this study, equal numbers from each stratum were selected. The four strata were created by dividing the districts selected for study on the basis of wealth and size. The median points for wealth and size were used to create the four strata. They were determined as follows:

STRATUM A: Districts with over 1050 ADA and over 3000 Local Wealth

STRATUM B: Districts with over 1050 ADA and under 3000 Local Wealth

STRATUM C: Districts with under 1050 ADA and over 3000 Local Wealth

STRATUM D: Districts with under 1050 ADA and under 3000 Local Wealth

S I Z E	**STRATUM A**	**STRATUM B**
	STRATUM C	**STRATUM D**
	W E A L T H	

[19]Illinois State Board of Education, Department of School Finance, Annual State and Entitlement Statistics 1988-1989 (Springfield, Illinois: Illinois State Board of Education, 1988), pp.44-66 passim.

Following the categorizing of the districts according to the strata, a random sample selection was made of three districts from each stratum. This procedure identified the specific districts to be studied. It was determined that actual subjects for each district would consist of the superintendent and a principal. The interview technique was utilized as the primary method of data gathering as it enabled the investigator to gain insight into the character and degree of intensity of the respondents' attitudes, motives, feelings, and beliefs.[20] Through the interview process, it was possible to elicit information that could not be ordinarily obtained through the less personal procedure of a reply blank. It was believed that people would be more willing to communicate and provide more data in a setting that allowed them to meet the person soliciting the information. This also allowed the interviewer to provide guarantees to the interviewee regarding the use of the data. The technique provided the stimulation of personal contact as a means of "drawing out" the needed information.[21] Further advantages included the opportunity to penetrate beyond initial answers, follow-up unexpected responses, redirect the inquiry into more fruitful channels on the basis of emerging information, and modify categories to provide for a more meaningful analysis of the data.[22]

The information sought from the interview was basically in the form of open-ended responses to structured questions. While not rigidly structured, the interview focussed on a particular topic, namely that of strategies. This allowed the subject latitude in responding personally to justify or

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[20]Ralph H. Jones, Methods and Techniques of Educational Research (Danville, Illinois: Interstate Printers and Publishers Inc., 1973) p.412.

[21]Carter V. Good, A.S. Barr and Douglass E. Scates, The Methodology of Educational Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. 1941), p.378.

[22]Deobold B. Van Dalen, Understanding Educational Research (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1979), p.160.

explain his/her position on each question and assisted the investigator in obtaining comparable data across subjects.[23] In the interview process, both the superintendent and principal were administered the same instrument to determine whether the strategies espoused by the superintendent were perceived by the principal as actually being developed and implemented (A copy of the interview instrument is included in the appendix of this study.)

Within the interview instrument, each strategy was represented by components that reflected the degree of awareness, development, and implementation of said strategy. The results of the interview provided superintendents with insight into their effectiveness as district leaders. The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which superintendents have employed and effectively used specific leadership strategies.

By administering the interview instrument to several superintendents not included in the subject group, content validation was achieved. The process of validation affirmed that the components under each strategy were understandable and that they supplied sufficient information to reveal the thinking, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the specified strategies.

Prior to the actual interviewing process, permission to employ the use of a tape recorder is solicited from each subject. Carter Good contended that recording does not increase respondent resistance nor significantly affect the interview data.[24] Tape recording enables the interviewer to devote his full attention to the respondent. Also, the tape recorder provides an accurate record of what transpired, therefore eliminating conscious or subconscious omissions by

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[23]Robert C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklen, Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1982), p.

[24]Carter V. Good, Introduction to Educational Research, 2nd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Croft, 1963), pp.300-301.

the interviewer. Another advantage of tape recording is its aid in the evaluation of the reliability and validity of the interview data. Listening to the taped interviews assists in the clarification and interpretation of data.

Two component questions under the strategic area of "vision" serve as examples of the type of interview development that occurred: 1) "Give an example of a vision you have had for your district", and 2) "What procedures were provided for feedback regarding the vision?". If superintendent and/or principal responses indicated specific actions were undertaken in any of the individual components, a "yes" response was recorded. A "no" response was recorded when the superintendent and/or principal indicated a lack of action in any component. The total number of "yes" responses in each strategy category yielded a quantification of the use of that particular strategy by the superintendent. Upon accomplishing this task, an in-depth analysis was conducted to determine the quality of planning, implementation, and utilization of the strategy. Through follow-up questioning and further probing, a determination was made from the interpretation of the responses regarding the superintendent's use of the specified strategies.

A critical component of the study was the interviewing of the principal. The same question was posed to the principal pertaining to each leadership strategy implemented in the district. The responses were subjected to the same form of analysis as were those of the superintendent, thus allowing the investigator to draw conclusions about the superintendent's effectiveness relative to the identified leadership strategies.

Following the analysis of responses from each district, results of the superintendent and principal interviews were then compared and contrasted with the results from other districts within and without the stratum to determine the effective use of the specific strategies by the superintendent. Patterns of responses within or between the

strata were sought, as well as, trends that became evident from the data analysis. Recommendations were based upon the analyzing of the data collected from the interviews with: 1) related literature, 2) other school districts within the same stratum, and 3) school districts included in the study from the other three stratum. Quantification was held to a minimum while qualitative investigation involving planning, implementation, and utilization was emphasized.

LIMITATIONS

Some limitations were inherent in the undertaking of this study. The analysis of only elementary school superintendent leadership strategies was a limiting factor. However, the assumption was that a universal quality exists from the application of these strategies in any leadership capacity in any type of school district throughout the United States. Geographically, all of the school districts included in this study were located near the city of Chicago. It was assumed that this area, with its diversity of populations, provided a representative sample of schools districts throughout the state of Illinois and throughout the country.

The creation of the four strata was designed to ensure a representative sample. However, there is no guarantee that the study had applicability beyond its population.

Another limitation was related to the use of the interview technique as a means of data gathering. While the interview method proved to be the most effective means of gathering in-depth qualitative data, it was not flawless. Although measures were taken to maintain objectivity in the interviewing process by the use of a structured instrument, other factors may have altered subject responses. The physical characteristics, ethnic background, or social class of the interviewer may have resulted in a variation in the degree of openness on the part of the interviewee, dependent

upon his/her personal biases or perspectives.[25] Other factors that may have resulted in data variations were the interviewee's fatigue level and degree of boredom. The recording skill of the interviewer could also have contributed to a possible limiting factor. An often subtle and sometimes unrecognized danger that may have provided a limitation is the interviewer's knowledge of the hypothesis being tested or awareness of early data return, resulting in unconscious visual or vocal cues to the subjects.[26] The interviewer's attitudes and expectations of the subjects' opinions or perspectives may have influenced responses and the recording of such. In this study, an earnest attempt was made to minimize these limitations through refinement during the validation process and an awareness of the potential for subjectivity and personal bias throughout the interview procedure. Therefore, these limitations were not key factors in this study.

Further limitations may have been imposed upon this study by the fact that some of the questions asked regarding procedures, processes and examples may have required the remembering of details that may have occurred over an expanse of time, thus resulting in incomplete recollections by the interviewee. A related issue involved the possible limitation created by the respondent's lack of understanding of the questions, as well as, the degree of sincerity of the responses. Through the use of probing questions, the investigator attempted to clarify any misunderstandings related to the interview instrument. The respondent's degree of sincerity was a factor of the data that was accepted.

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[25]Max D. Engelhart, Methods of Educational Research (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1972), p.114.
[26]Van Dalen, Understanding Educational Research, p.158.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

The primary focus of this study was to analyze the use of effective strategies by superintendents in the areas of vision, communication of culture, trust, and self-deployment. These four strategies were identified as integral components of effective leadership. Therefore, the literature and research were reviewed in relation to the role of the school superintendent, as well as, that of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) in business and industry. Furthermore, it was evident that the majority of research conducted in the area of effective leadership concentrated upon CEOs in business and industry. Consequently, the literature and research regarding the development and application of the strategies was reviewed and organized into the following four sections:

STRATEGY I: Attention through vision
STRATEGY II: Meaning through communication (culture)
STRATEGY III: Trust through positioning
STRATEGY IV: Deployment of self

Strategy I: Attention Through Vision

The principles and practices of the best run companies have some applicability in public and private education. A prevailing problem in many school districts in this country and one that prevents them from achieving excellence is the lack of understanding of what is expected of employees, who proceed with their jobs without a clear purpose. This situation exists because the school district has not articulated its values or set forth a vision statement. The

creating of a vision statement is critical and essential if workers are to understand how they should perform.[1]

In many districts, a vision statement has been prepared. However, employees have not been made aware of its existence and, consequently, are not incorporating its tenets into their daily work activities. The vision is not inculcated into the behaviors or 'culture" of the school district and is not emphasized or promoted by the superintendent.[2]

In identifying characteristics of effective school districts, A.A. Glatthorn notes that in such districts the superintendent establishes a clear sense of its vision. The district vision is supported and reinforced by clearly stated educational goals that provide employees with a sense of direction to their efforts. Articulating the vision by the superintendent results in coordinated efforts and clear expectations.[3]

Effective leaders realize that relying on current operational success is not a guarantee for the future. The belief that the organization or district will remain as it currently is, and will continue to function effectively, is an unsafe assumption. People in control must develop a vision to find direction. There are inherent risks involved in assuming the initiative; however, there are greater risks in waiting for events to happen. Individuals in positions of authority must analyze problems and offer clear alternatives.[4]

Successful leaders are noted for their ability to motivate, convince, communicate, and make understandable a vision of what they want their employees to attain. That

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1James Lewis, Jr., Achieving Excellence in Our Schools (Westbury, New York: J.L. Wilkerson Publishing Company, 1986), 31.
2Ibid.
3Alan A. Glatthorn, Supervisory Leadership: Introduction to Instructional Supervision (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman/Little Brown Publishing Companies, 1990), 7.
4Warren Bennis, Why Leaders Can't Lead (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989), 154.

vision must be articulated in ways that spark the imagination of the workers through activities that allow them to experience what the leader is trying to accomplish.[5] Effective leaders motivate others towards goals that they would not normally pursue. They influence people through superior knowledge or ability, coercion mediated through rewards or punishments, and other inducements. Appealing to self-interest and the good of the group, being part of an important activity, and associating with people who possess admired intellectual, philosophical or physical qualities are the leader's sources of influence. The actual process of working towards a desired vision involves individuals and provides responsibility for what will be experienced in the future. This represents hope, and promotes behavior, activities, and accomplishments that are necessary for the attainment of what is clearly understood as being good for both the organization and the individual. Employees are engaging in activities that they want to do while being aligned with the vision of the organization. This results in a highly motivated and fulfilled work force. If influence is used to merge divergent goals and behavior into a cohesive, direction-setting vision of ends and means, meaningful results are achieved.[6]

In developing a vision statement, both the first and final drafts must be completed by one person--the chief executive officer of the organization. The CEO (superintendent) should consult with a variety of people to become acquainted with the dreams, deep-seated values, and beliefs of the major stakeholders, seeking a consensus among those they lead. They listen carefully to obtain a sense of what people desire, what they value, and the nature of their dreams. Leaders who are effective are acutely aware of the

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[5]Arthur C. Beek, and Ellis D. Hillmar, Positive Management Practices (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1986), 43.
[6]David Parks, "Create a Vision, Build a Consensus, Be An Effective Leader," Clearing House 60 (October, 1986) : 88.

attitudes and feelings of others so that they may discover the common value that links the organization together. Group and committee meetings should be held to discuss elements of the vision prior to the preparation of the final draft by the leader. This ensures that he/she has a pulse on community feeling. Also, such meetings create a sense of excitement in the community regarding the district's "destiny" as articulated in the vision. At these meetings, people are provided with a feeling of participation in the development of the vision statement; however, it must be made clear that the discussions were held for the purpose of gathering input and recommendations for the person preparing the final statement.[7]

Vision statements should be relatively simple. They must attempt to appeal to widely shared values and beliefs, and articulate the obvious but important and noble purposes of schooling. Examples of vision statements are:

> "to help our children achieve their full potential and live healthier happier and more productive lives"
> "our public schools are a place where children of all races and social backgrounds can work and learn together in peace and order and develop skills necessary to pursue successful careers of their choice and become successful leaders"
> "all of God's children will be free at last!"
> "that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth"[8]

It is not necessary to have the charisma of Martin Luther King, Jr. or Abraham Lincoln to create a powerful vision statement. The ability to create, articulate, and motivate can be learned and developed by effective leaders.

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[7]John J. Mauriel, Strategic Leadership for Schools (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989) 135.
[8]Ibid.

"Leadership is the marshaling of skills possessed by a majority but used by a minority. It can be learned by anyone, taught to everyone, and denied to no one."[9]

The vision must be visible and communicated broadly to the entire community. While the task of creating the vision may have been shared with key members of the organization, the vision remains the core responsibility of the leader.

What is crucial about a vision is not its originality, but how well it serves the interests of its constituencies--customers, stockholders, students, and employees. In the early 1980's under the philosophy and leadership of General Motors' chairman Roger Smith, several years of committee work and staff analysis resulted in the adoption of a vision of the future. Many people were involved in carefully assessing advantages and disadvantages for General Motors. Committee discussion led to agreement and commitment to a vision.[10] Lee Iacocca developed an agenda for himself and his company that included a bold new vision of what the Chrysler Corporation could and should be. It was a vision of a competitive and profitable firm that produced higher quality products, provided for better employment opportunities, and was strong enough to survive in the increasingly competitive automobile industry. The vision was valued because it met the long term interests of all stakeholders (customers, employees, stockholders, and others). Iacocca was successful in creating the vision because he was able to draw upon his extensive experience in the automobile business. He also relied upon his intuitive and directive leadership, philosophy, and style. Both General Motors and Chrysler had a vision due to effective leadership proactively shaping a new

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[9]Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, Leaders (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1985), 27.

[10]Noel M. Tichy and David O. Ulrich, "The Leadership Challenge--A Call for the Transformational Leader," Sloan Management Review 26 (Fall, 1984): 64.

direction that correctly responded to environmental pressures and transitions within the organization.[11]

Visionary leaders such as Iacocca and Smith demonstrated characteristics that define an executive with vision. Successful leaders are most likely to:

--Investigate ideas, concepts, and alternative ways of approaching problems until a clear vision emerges.
--Articulates the vision in a comprehensible manner.
--Encourages employees to follow the vision through personal example and hard work.
--Maintains contact with employees at all levels to monitor the impact of the vision.
--Communicates in a supportive, "We're in this together" manner.
--Relates the vision to individual concerns by translating the vision into a purpose for being for all employees.
--Identifies the strengths of the organization and uses them to ensure the success of the vision.
--Remains as the foremost shaper of the vision by direct involvement in the center of action.
--Monitors changes within and without the organization and modifies or improves the vision accordingly.
--Views the success of the organization by its ability to fulfill the vision.[12]

It is clearly evident that effective leadership cannot exist without vision. It is vision that guides the decisions of leader with respect to product and process. The vision must be consensual. Employees must understand and accept the vision if they are to work towards its accomplishment. The leader develops the vision through informal and formal

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[11]Lee Iacocca, Talking Straight (New York: Bantam Books, 1988), 76.
[12]Craig R. Hickman and Michael A. Silva, Creating Excellence (New York: Penguin Books, Inc., 1984), 160-161.

discussions and group meetings. Throughout the process, the leader accepts the ideas of others and tolerates ambiguity and disorder without frustration. The leader clarifies ideas, presents views persuasively, and guides the work of the groups and individuals involved. The direction, desires and needs of participating members are considered. The end result is a vision that motivates and excites all employees to reach the desired future state.

Strategy II: Meaning Through Communication (Culture)

The function of leadership is to produce change; therefore, setting the direction of that change is fundamental. Rather than continuing to move organizations along traditional paths, effective leaders must transform organizations and lead them down new pathways. Setting a direction is inductive. Leaders gather a broad range of data and search for patterns, relationships, and linkages that help explain situations. This direction-setting aspect of leadership does not produce plans; rather, it creates visioned strategies that lead to a new culture. The new culture must transform the organization into an ideal state that is fundamentally different from the present state. Unless this belief is widespread, members will be unwilling to give up the present culture for a fantasy in the future.[13]

Successful school districts have strong and functional cultures that are aligned with a vision of excellence in schooling. This culture serves as a guide to direct people towards a common direction and provides a set of norms that defines what should be accomplished and how. It supplies a source of meaning and significance for teachers, students, administrators, and all other interested parties. Strong

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[13]John P. Kotter, "What Leaders Really Do", Harvard Business Review 68 (May-June, 1990): 104.

functional cultures emerge when they are nurtured and built by the district's leadership and membership.[14]

Culture building requires the district leader to focus upon the informal, subtle, and symbolic aspects of school life. Teachers, parents, and students seek answers to such basic questions as "What is school about?", "What is important?", "What do we believe in?", and "Why do we function the way we do?". Answers to such questions provide a sense of orderliness to school life, derived from a sense of purpose and meaning.[15]

Culture is the invisible force behind the tangibles and observables within an organization. It is a social energy that moves the people into action. Culture is to the organization what personality is to the individual--a subtle unifying theme that provides meaning, direction, and mobilization. Within an organization, culture plays two central roles. In the first role, culture provides members with a common understanding and an avenue for making sense of events and symbols. For example, when confronted with problems, employees understand how to approach them in the "appropriate established" manner. The second role, culture provides meaning. It also develops values that justify behaviors which are encouraged and behaviors which are excluded. Companies with strong cultures have been able to commit people to the organization and have them identify very personally and closely with the organization's success.[16]

Chet Marks of the Dow Chemical Company explored the role of culture in maintaining the company vision. Marks believed that to sustain vision over an extended period of time, the vision must become an integral part of the organization's culture through the job performances of all individuals and

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[14]John Cruz, "Instructional Leadership: A Superintendent's Contribution to School Effectiveness," Thrust 15 (Nov/Dec, 1985): 14.

[15]Thomas J. Sergiovanni "Leadership and Excellence in Schooling, Educational Leadership 41 (1984): 10.

[16]Tichy and Ulrich, Transformational Leader, p. 67.

the actual manner in which the company is organized. He defined a successful organization as one in which the vision has become a part of what everyone is doing and is known and understood by all employees. In such an organization, everyone is committed to achieving the vision through every action that is taken.[17]

International Business Machines (IBM) has a deeply rooted culture that is its major strength due to its consistency with its strategies. IBM has always been viewed as competent, successful, and ethical. The practice at IBM is to reward and promote people within the organization who produce. Employees are dismissed for poor performance, typically early in their careers. The belief held by IBM is that it would be unable to reward good performance if it were forced to subsidize those who did not produce.[18]

Cultures do not occur randomly. They occur when leaders devote time to and reward some behaviors and practices more than others. A company's culture is so pervasive, that changing a dysfunctional culture becomes one of the most difficult tasks that any leader may undertake.[19]

A dysfunctional culture is evident when the social energy of the organization steers members in the wrong direction. Small groups pressure their members to persist in behaviors that perhaps worked effectively in the past, but are now inappropriate. Gradually, the organization falls into a "culture rut" where members pursue goals blindly and unconsciously out of habit. No adaptation for change is provided. Routine procedures are followed although success is not forthcoming. Social energy not only works against the organization, but it is contrary to individual member's

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[17]Benjamin B. Tregoe et al., Vision in Action (New York: Simon and Schuster Inc., 1989), 103.
[18]Buck Rodgers, The IBM Way (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1986), 12.
[19]Howard Schwartz and Stan Davis, "Corporate Culture: The Hard-To-Change Values Spell Success or Failure," Business Week (October, 1980): 149.

desires. This ineffective state characterized by everyone pressuring each other to comply with the unstated, below the surface, invisible culture may continue for years. The result is a collective depression and an ineffective work force. Pronouncements of promises to improve the situation are met with a "nothing-seems-to-matter" attitude.[20]

When culture does become dysfunctional, leadership is needed to assist the group in rethinking some of its cultural assumptions and learning new ones. The unique and essential function of leadership is the manipulation or transformation of culture. Such transformation requires conscious and deliberate destruction of cultural elements. It is this aspect of cultural dynamics that needs effective leadership. The effective leader must communicate and then implement multiple change techniques, ranging from the role modeling of symbolic acts to creating rituals.[21]

When members of a culture are at least open to change, it is miraculous how survey results or lists of desired norms affect them. There is often a great sense of relief as people realize that they are able to live according to different norms and have the power to change their work environment. However, the sad reality in most cases is that members are often cynical and depressed. They claim that their group cannot change until the level of management above them changes. This next level of management claims, in turn, to possess no power to change until their immediate superiors allow them to change. The corporate culture is conveying messages such as "Don't take on responsibility; protect yourself at all costs; don't lead the way, follow; if you ignore the problem it will go away". These conditions describe a culture rut; people pursue behaviors without questions. There is no adaptation or revision attempted.

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[20]Ralph H. Kilman, Managing Beyond the Quick Fix (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989), 50.
[21]Edgar H. Schein, Organizational Culture and Leadership (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989), 317.

Routine motions are repeated without success. Social energy not only works against the organization but it is contrary to the wishes of the individual.[22]

If leaders decide that change should occur, it can be affected. However, the mere listing and stating of the desired norms is not sufficient to instill a new culture. Each organization must develop a sanctioning system that monitors and enforces the desired norms. A number of integrative actions can assist in the weaving of the innovation into the organization's culture. People need to learn how to use or incorporate new ideas, techniques, and procedures. This process is aided by training in the newly required skills. The training helps people to work through the transitional period. Successful organizations invest significantly in training through communication. Vehicles such as conferences, networking and informal visits to spread the information and transfer experiences from earlier uses to newer ones have proven effective.[23]

It is of critical importance that rewards change to support the new practices. When employees successfully implement the revised practices, they should receive publicity and recognition. Formal rewards, such as requiring a twenty percent participation in a quality program as a prerequisite for eligibility to receive a bonus should be considered.[24]

Leaders should demonstrate that they expect the changes to occur and continue to exert pressure even when the momentum appears to be slowing. In successful change efforts there is a continuing series of reinforcing messages from leaders, that are both explicit and symbolic. These messages create momentum. As the new practices are adopted by more and more people, the increase in effectiveness is stressed

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[22]Kilman, Managing Beyond the Quick Fix, 65.
[23]Rosabeth Moss Kanter, The Change Masters (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 300.
[24]Ibid.

frequently and on multiple occasions. It then becomes embarrassingly "out of sync" not to employ the new strategies.[25]

Murphy and Hallinger conducted a study on the leadership style of superintendents in California schools identified as effective school districts. An instructionally effective school district was defined as one in which there existed high overall levels of student achievement across the subject areas, growth in achievement over time, and consistency of achievement across all sub-populations of students. Results of the study suggest that superintendents in effective school districts are more active instructional leaders than the effective superintendents described in previous studies. In the instructionally effective school districts described by Murphy and Hallinger, the superintendents focused a high degree of attention on instruction and curriculum. A wide range of culture-building activities, such as establishing policies and practices, were undertaken and monitored by the superintendent. This involved a considerable amount of time and energy to ensure that the district worked towards its goals. They did not assume that the actions needed to make the school system work well would automatically occur simply because goals were developed and embedded organizational structures were in place. The superintendents actively pursued the development of these "organizational events". The leadership demonstrated made the districts more effective instructionally.[26]

Leaders may also heighten their followers' belief in their ability to achieve a new culture. All organizations depend upon the existence of shared meanings and interpretation of reality. An effective leader taps

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[25]Ibid., 301.

[26]Joseph Murphy and Phillip Hallinger, "The Superintendent as Instructional Leader: Findings from Effective School Districts," The Journal of Educational Administration 24 (Summer,1986): 216.

motivational energy through a psychological process known as "empowerment". Empowerment is essentially a process of strengthening subordinates' convictions in their own self-efficacy, which is defined as the belief that one has the power to bring about certain results. These beliefs are critical because they determine the extent to which people will initiate and persist in attempts to master difficult experiences. Empowerment heightens a person's willingness to attempt tasks which appear too difficult and allows the individual to apply sustained efforts without becoming overly concerned about achieving a flawless product. Tasks that may have been deemed impossible are now perceived as feasible. Empowerment is a powerful force due to people's strong commitment to their own ideas. A decision emanating from an outside force rarely generates a sense of excitement for making it work. Conversely, an idea is difficult to reject when its source is the person responsible for its implementation.[27]

Effective leaders empower their work force. Evidence of empowerment may be exemplified in four key areas:

--Employees believe that they make a difference. Regardless of the complexity of their job, they feel that what they do is important and significant.

--Learning is an on-going and important process undertaken by each employee. Errors are viewed as learning experiences, rather than failures.

--Members of the organization belong to the working community. While not all employees may personally like each other, a sense of community unites them in much the same way that members of a family operate as a unit.

--Employees are "pulled" rather than "pushed" toward reaching goals. The atmosphere created by the leader is

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[27]Robert H. Waterman, The Renewal Factor (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1987), 84.

> so stimulating and exciting, that employees find their work challenging and fun.[28]

A vivid example of empowerment is the success of the Ford Taurus Program. The voluntary program allowed the employee to have input into decision-making and problem-solving, as a means of increasing job effectiveness. The philosophy was based upon the belief that the person doing the actual work knew the job better than the supervisor. The chief executive of Ford, Philip Caldwell, stated:

> "The magic of employee involvement is that it allows individuals to work in more creative ways. A survey last year of more than seven hundred fifty participants at seven facilities found that a full eight-two percent felt they now had a chance to accomplish something worthwhile, compared with only twenty-seven percent before the program was initiated. People developed a pride in workmanship, self-respect, self-reliance, and a heightened sense of responsibility. This contributed importantly to a significan improvement in product quality and productivity."[29]

Effective leaders construct tasks and rewards that enhance an employee's perceptions of accomplishment, thus the subordinate experiences an initial success by the subordinate. Empowering others may also be accomplished by verbally persuading them that they have the capacity to master a difficult task. They are then more likely to mobilize a greater sustained effort than if they had harbored self-doubts or focused on their personal deficiencies.[30]

Highly visible and personal rewards express a leader's confidence in a subordinate. One of the most important rewards for an employee is the leader's personal approval. Recognition received from the leader confirms the self-worth of the employee.[31]

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[28]Warren Bennis, "The Four Competencies of Leadership," School Library Media Quarterly 15 (Summer, 1987): 199.

[29]Waterman, The Renewal Factor, 84.

[30]Jay A. Conger, The Charismatic Leader (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989), 109.

[31]Ibid.

An illustration of the effect of empowerment is provided in a description of the techniques employed by Bob Lipp, who assumed the failing banking operations of Chemical Bank. Lipp decentralized authority in the system allowing branch managers the opportunity to have more direct control over their performance and accomplishments. Each month he would summon the top ten managers, congratulate them, and ask them to "take your staff out to dinner on me". Lipp's new management system and peer group competition was counter-cultural. The history of banking had been one of security for employees, not compensation or challenge. As the branch managers began to meet their performance objectives, a greater sense of confidence and empowerment was experienced throughout the organization. He visited two hundred fifty managers to express confidence in his employees' abilities to implement the new organizational mission. He devoted a significant amount of time to his employees by talking extensively with them about their abilities to transform the culture of the organization.[32]

In a report presented to the National Governors' Association in 1986, it was stated that superintendents can be, and in many districts are, the major catalysts in school restructuring. The superintendent has a special overview that eases the ability to direct change. It is the superintendent alone who has the view of the entire system--programs, personnel, and finances. The environment is established by informing the staff that change leading to better schools is welcome, and by encouraging staff members to share ideas with not only each other but with the superintendent. Through this process the superintendent becomes accessible to anyone with a good idea and allows staff to feel that their suggestions are valuable. Furthermore, by encouraging people to assume risks and supporting their efforts, even when an idea fails to meet expectations, a sense of security is established.

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[32]Ibid., 111.

Finally, the superintendent can reward those who initiate change through public recognition, thereby sending the message that the superintendent welcomes creativity.[33]

As the organization's culture is developed, leaders must maintain the attitude, skills, and accomplishments necessary to realize the vision. Leadership can assist maintenance through teaching and coaching.

Various formats may be used for teaching. In some instances, the leader will exemplify through his/her behaviors, certain key values and skills. A chief executive officer of a large consulting firm devoted a significant portion of his time to being out of the office and in the marketplace. By being highly visible, he was, in essence, role-modeling an activity critical to success. A subordinate of this leader commented on this lesson: "His chair is typically empty. He's off travelling...he learns everything by talking to people...he's on the leading edge!" A value was thus set in this organization--reach the people by talking and listening to people. The CEO modeled a value. This particular modeling behavior is more effective than a traditional direct lesson. Informal messages are the more powerful teaching and coaching mechanisms. Most importantly, it underscores the great fallacy inherent in the common practice of "doing as I say, not as I do".[34]

If leaders expect the new culture to be learned by both new and long-standing members of the organization, they must be willing to create a reward, promotion, and status system that is consistent with the new culture. While the message is delivered initially from the daily modeling behaviors of the leader, it is judged in the long term upon whether rewards are allocated consistently with that of daily behaviors. If

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[33]Nancy Paulu, "Key Player in School Reform: The Superintendent," The School Administrator 46 (March, 1989): 9.

[34]Charles C. Manz and Henry P. Sims SuperLeadership (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1989), 82.

these levels of message transmission are inconsistent , a dysfunctional culture results.[35]

As chief executive officers become increasingly aware of the need for a vision in their organizations, they discover that they must consider the effects of the vision on the company. As CEOs, they must decide whether the vision must change to fit the company's culture, or whether the culture must change to assure survival of the vision.[36]

In a paper presented to the American Educational Research Association, Flora Ortiz arrived at an important conclusion regarding the creation of culture. After studying three superintendents and analyzing their leadership styles, Ortiz concluded that the creation of a new culture requires changes in activities, relational patterns, and in definitions of organizational functions. These new behaviors were evident at all levels and were emphasized by each superintendent studied.[37]

Strategy III: Trust Through Positioning

Opening the door to change requires an essential component--trust. When leaders take a stand, describe their vision, set ground rules, and promise support, they begin to build the foundation for trust. Through actions and words, leaders express their desire for change and their commitment to listen and accept new ideas. Warren Bennis emphasized that people would prefer to follow individuals whom they perceive as reliable, even when a disagreement on viewpoints arises, rather than individuals with whom they may agree, but who

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[35]Schein, Organizational Culture and Leadership, 235.

[36]Schwartz and Davis, Corporate Culture, 151.

[37]Flora I. Ortiz, "A Companion of Leadership Styles and Organizational Culture," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, 16-20 April 1986, ERIC ED 269174, microfiche.

shift positions frequently. Consistency and focus are vital to trust.[38]

A leader's consistent defense and promotion of identified values is crucial. Compromise of these values, even in the slightest form, quickly leads to employee skepticism and causes them to view the leader's commitment as hypocritical, shallow, and manipulative. Consistency is, therefore, vital to establishing a commitment to the organization's values that is recognized as true and genuine.[39]

It is also important that a leader's behaviors are viewed as consistent. Actions that are construed as inconsistent by employees result in an increase in anxiety-producing uncertainty, questions regarding fairness, and confusion about the nature and priority of goals. A leader whose behaviors are inconsistent are seen as deceptive and manipulative. Employees' interpretations of a leader's actions are most important to successful leadership. Behavior that is consistent is the most effective defense against misinterpretations which can ultimately be damaging to a leader's effectiveness.[40]

Leaders receive the trust of their employees partly due to their positive view of people. They embrace Douglas McGregor's Theory Y: people want to work and contribute to the organization. As a result, effective leaders bring the best people to an organization and subsequently "bring out the best" in those people.[41] Leaders who express this positive view are willing to share responsibility and involve others in in the planning stages that refine the corporate culture and identify opportunities and problems along the way. Those who trust more are less likely to lie, and

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[38]Bennis, Why Leaders Can't Lead, 21.

[39]Joseph L. Badaracco,Jr. and Richard R. Ellsworth, Leadership and the Quest for Integrity, (Boston, Massachusetts, Harvard Business School Press, 1989), 207.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960), 48.

possibly, less likely to cheat or steal. They are more apt to give others a second chance and to respect their rights. High trusters are less likely to be unhappy, conflicted or maladjusted. Both low trusting and high trusting people tend to seek them as friends. While high trusters are no less intelligent or more gullible than others, they do attract people because they are trustworthy.[42]

In Paulu's study of sixteen superintendents, she noted that superintendents built trust from the first day that they assumed their position. They worked on generating the trust of parents, teachers, principals, and media. Frequent contact and strong personal skills assisted superintendents in cementing strong relationships with their staffs and communities. However, the development of trust ultimately rested upon the superintendents' actions. If the community approved of the actions, they were more likely to support his or her new ideas. In most situations, it was the person who was judged, not the idea itself.[43]

Effective leaders are trusted because they demonstrate a high level of selflessness. They are more compelled to serve the vision than to serve their own personal interests and needs. Facing a complex environment, conflicting market and technological pressures, and demands for short term results and long term viability, leaders realize they must rely upon input from others to cope with uncertainty and ambiguity. They learn to depend on others for necessary information and advice.[44]

An effective leader also builds trust through commitment. On-going travel to operating sites, or working long hours, for example, may be interpreted as signs of the leader's

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[42]Julian B. Rotter, "Trust and Gullibility," Psychology Today 14 (October, 1980): 52.

[43]Paulu, "Key Player in School Reform: The Superintendent," 9.

[44]Mark A. Frohman and Perry Pascarella, The Purpose-Driven Organization (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989), 121.

personal investment in the organization. The excitement expressed in a leader's voice when speaking of organizational goals can convey a feeling of strong commitment. A leader's involvement in projects that symbolize the organization's vision is yet another means of achieving trust.[45]

The concept of total commitment to an idea or vision is exemplified in the actions of Arch McGill, vice president of the IBM Corporation. McGill became involved early on in personal computers. The extent of his involvement and its impact on the company was noted by a senior member of his team, who commented that McGill's approach led other employees to conclude that "it was important that we understand the personal computer market and what it meant to our future". McGill had bought a personal computer and proceeded to call in every CEO and consultant who was familiar with them. He continued to use every resource available until he felt he knew as much as there was to know about personal computers. The intensity of his approach demonstrated a "hands on" willingness to become involved. This, in turn, clearly conveyed the message to his employees that this was an important technology that they would need to understand. The commitment not only ensured trust in the company's leader, but also directed subordinates' attention to what was important. The result was a valuable learning situation for both the leader and his employees.[46]

In a study conducted by Jennings, a high disclosure of communication was found to correlate significantly with the measure of trust between the superintendent and board members. Trust and high disclosure of communication were, therefore, interdependent variables. Trust was also generated by the superintendent's expertise and character. The implications of the study indicate that more attention should be given to the interpersonal relationship between the

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[45]Conger, Charismatic Leader, 105.
[46]Ibid.

superintendent and board members to promote better team work and decision-making. The high quality and quantity of communication exchanges of the leaders validated their ability to accomplish necessary tasks and promoted the presence of trust.[47]

James Driscoll conducted a study to assess the usefulness of trust and participation in decision-making in predicting satisfaction among college faculty. Results indicated that organizational trust was a better predictor of overall satisfaction than was participation in decision-making. Furthermore, it added significantly to the prediction of satisfaction with participation in decision-making itself. Therefore, regardless of an employee's level of involvement in the decision-making process, and regardless of the fit between desired and perceived levels of the involvement, people with more trust in their organization's decision-makers are more satisfied with their level of participation. The implications of these results are most interesting concerning those employees with low levels of opportunities for participation. A high degree of trust in the leaders allows for continued satisfaction among the employees who may not have significant involvement in decision-making processes.[48]

The effects of trust on group problem-solving activities were studied by Dale Zand. His study revealed that when a group tackled a problem, two concerns emerged: one being the problem itself, and the second being the relationship between group members in the problem-solving task. Zand found that in low trust groups, interpersonal relationships interfered with

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[47]Aleshire F. Jennings, "The Dynamics of Communication and Trust as School Board and Superintendent Prepare for Public Meeting," (unpublished ED.D dissertation, Arizona State University, 1980) Dissertation Abstracts 41 (February, 1980) 470A.

[48]James N. Driscoll, "Trust and Participation in Organizational Decision Making as Predictors of Satisfaction," Academy of Management Journal 21 (March, 1978): 54.

and distorted perceptions of the problem. Energy and creativity were diverted from the search for comprehensive, realistic solutions. Group members tended to use the problem as a means of minimizing their vulnerability. By contrast, high trust groups experienced less socially generated insecurities and solved problems more effectively.[49]

In a related study, Wayne Boss supported Zand's results. Boss studied the influence of a person's perception of high or low trust as he entered a problem-solving situation. Under high trust conditions, the subjects tended to solve problems in a more effective, creative style. Under conditions perceived as low trust, the problem-solving mechanisms became ineffective and degenerative.[50]

Theory Z demonstrates the importance of trust. A "Z" company is typified by a culture in which all employees are working for some good. The trust that is communicated indicates a sense that employees matter as people, not as parts of an organizational machine. The company philosophy promotes the idea that an employee who enjoys his job will be productive; that is, high performance and job satisfaction are closely aligned. The sense of caring is carried beyond the work setting, as leaders and their subordinates socialize outside the work day. CEO's will often vacation with their employees as part of an established tradition within the company. The time away from work spent in leisure activities results in the development of relationships of trust through a better understanding of each other's personalities. Being viewed as untrustworthy in such a company is considered a serious offense.[51]

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[49]Dale E. Zand, "Trust and Managerial Problem Solving", Administrative Science Quarterly 17 (June, 1972): 238.

[50]Wayne Boss, "Trust and Managerial Problem Solving Revisited," Group and Organizational Studies 3 (September, 1978): 342.

[51]William Ouchi, Theory Z--How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company Inc., 1981), 206.

Morgan Bank maintains a "Z" culture through its use of formal and informal time to build trust from the first day of employee training. The program for each new bank officer is designed to assist classmates in establishing a rapport with one another, as well as, to build technical banking skills. Mimi Willoughby, a new employee at the bank's Manhattan headquarters described her training experience as twelve hours a day of hard work, followed by dinner with her colleagues. The relationships she formed during the after-work dinners were maintained thereafter. She noted that the support of these new friendships was invaluable in making the long hours or training less like work. With a growing emphasis upon rapid communication across time zones, countries, and continents, companies are realizing the importance of a strong rapport between people. Customer needs are most often met when the company representative has established a sense of trust. It bonds the company together.[52]

Trust is also built through a leader's personal contact with people. The more visible leaders are to their employees, the more opportunities they have to clarify corporate intentions, current situations, or a group's performance. Peters and Waterman popularized the term "management by walking around, or "MBWA". Leaders who use "MBWA" allow for the sharing of feelings, values, and vision. It provides employees with a firsthand look at the consistency between the leader's intentions and his or her behaviors. The direct contact assists the leader in setting expectations and tracking performance. This process results in a commitment from an individual based upon a clearer understanding of the total organizational structure and how that individual fits within it. Without this insight, some individuals may not have clear expectations of themselves as employees. They may possess only self-centered, short-term expectations.

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[52]Waterman, Renewal Factor, 193.

Employees need and desire an explanation of how corporate vision translates into day to day expectations for them.[53]

Leader expertise is yet another means of establishing trust. The company vision is usually difficult to achieve and involves great risks. The leader, therefore, must be able to convince subordinates that they possess the skills necessary to fulfill the vision. This perception leads employees to believe that leaders must have the answers or are at least capable of directing them to the path that leads to the accomplishment of the vision.[54]

John DeLorean exemplified a leader in whom much trust was placed. During his years at General Motors, his unconventionality demonstrated a strong commitment to freedom of individual expression. He was noted for taking highly visible risks that involved the possibility of reprimands or other penalties. This behavior demonstrated to his subordinates that he was willing to undertake career risks for his beliefs. Despite his unconventional behaviors, DeLorean continued to be promoted in the company, further increasing the perception of him as a leader with ability and a high level of expertise.[55]

Trust is an important and critical tool that must be possessed by a leader to ensure success. Consistency is established by the leader's stand and focus on key issues. Effective leaders demonstrate a positive view of people and build trust through strong interpersonal relationships. Their interactions with employees are characterized by a sharing of ideas and a common commitment. They are visible, available, and transmit an expertise for accomplishing their goals.

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[53]Peters and Waterman, In Search of Excellence, 122.

[54]Conger, The Charismatic Leader, 104.

[55]Joanne Martin and Caren Siehl, "Organizational Culture and Counterculture: An Uneasy Symbiosis," Organizational Dynamics 12 (1983): 57.

Strategy IV: Deployment of Self

Self-awareness of personal skills and the ability to deploy them effectively is a critical strategy in successful leadership. Self deployment through positive self regard consists of three major components: 1) knowledge of one's strengths, 2) the ability to perceive the coordination between personal strengths and weaknesses, and 3) the needs of the organization.[56]

The evolving of self-development is intertwined with a sense of belief that the work undertaken in the organization is worthwhile. A strong commitment to the company's vision is also involved. It means that the person most responsible for an individual's development is the person himself. Therefore, the first responsibility of the organization's leader is to fully develop his own skills. Bennis, in interviewing successful leaders, noted an agreement among them that effective leadership is not taught by others, but is, rather, a matter of self-development.[57]

The process of teaching oneself to become effective may involve several methods of learning. Emulation, role-taking, personal growth, and skill accumulation are all examples of ways to develop oneself. However, effective leadership also plays a critical role in supporting an employee's efforts to fully develop his abilities.[58]

Ron Zemke reports in Training, that expectations set forth by an individual's superior are closely linked with the subordinate's performance and career progress. A unique characteristic of an outstanding leader is his ability to create high performance expectations that his employees meet or exceed. Less effective leaders do not develop such

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[56]Bennis and Nanus, Leaders, 57-60.
[57]Ibid.
[58]Warren Bennis, On Becoming a Leader, (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1989), 56.

expectations, resulting in lower productivity by their subordinates. Employees perform as they are expected to perform. The Honeywell Studies on how managers learn to manage provide further reinforcement of the observed relationship between employer expectations and employee job performance. Results of the studies reveal that a critical factor in effective managing is the self-initiating of the leader's own development. They also conclude that management skills are learned in the following ratios: 50% job experiences, 30% relationships, and 20% formal training. The percentage of skills gained through formal training (20%) is noteworthy in that the average manager devotes less than 1% of his time in training activities.[59]

The 30% ratio is significant in that it pertains to the critical relationship between superiors and subordinates in developing competency in a particular assignment. An employee's first supervisor is likely to be the most influential person in his career. A superior who fails to provide the necessary assistance to a subordinate at this critical time, will produce an individual who sets lower standards for himself and develops a negative attitude about himself, his job, and the organization.[60]

A study of one hundred insurance salesmen reinforces the findings of the Honeywell Studies. In the study, the performance of two groups of fledgling insurance salesmen was analyzed. One group was supervised by agency managers who were recognized as highly competent. The other group was directed by less than competent managers. The results indicated that the new salesman with average sales aptitude were nearly five times as likely to succeed under the direction of the strong managers as those under the less competent managers. The trainees with superior sales aptitude

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[59]Ron Zemke, "The Honeywell Studies--How Managers Learn to Manage," Training 22 (August, 1985): 50.
[60]Ibid.

were twice as likely to succeed with the high performing managers than with low performing managers.[61]

Leaders should assume responsibility for future leadership, by identifying, developing, and nurturing future leaders. This process enables employees to reach their personal and institutional potential through a sense of momentum. The feeling of momentum is derived from a clear vision of what the corporation ought to be, and from communicated directions and plans that enable everyone to participate in achieving the corporate goals.[62]

The issue of delegation versus the "one-man-band" style of task completion has always been intensely debated. The Harvard Business School advocates delegating duties. However, it is crucial that leaders maintain a level of involvement with those to whom the tasks were delegated. Over-involvement on the leader's part leads to a slowing-down of the organization. The degree of delegation must eventually depend upon a self-assessment by the leader. Those duties that are perceived to be in the realm of the leader's strengths may be undertaken. Tasks that are not within the leader's area of expertise should be delegated to the appropriate employee. The successful leader will then learn from the person to whom the duty was delegated.[63]

Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, in their study of executives in the best managed American companies, noted that leadership in these companies stressed a clear philosophy of innovation and a creative use of personnel. Effective leaders emphasized and supported continued education, and encouraged experimentation and autonomy at lower levels of management. They also promoted principles as

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[61]Sterling Livingston, "Pygmalion in Management," Harvard Business Review 47 (July-August, 1969): 82.
[62]Max DePree, Leadership is an Art (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1989), 14.
[63]Iacocca, Talking Straight, 78.

opposed to rigid rules, and reinforced high quality products and services through rewards.[64]

To achieve success, a leader must hold himself accountable. The accountability is the result of the leader's growth towards meeting the responsibilities of the job. The acquiring of new skills may, therefore, be required. The newly developed skills promote self-confidence and self-mastery, which grow from continued successes that indicate high job performance. Self-confidence is internal mastery. Effectiveness is external mastery. Each is supportive of the other.[65]

Self-mastery is achieved through the orchestrating and developing of the leader's capabilities. Effective leaders view themselves as participating in a process that never ends. They hold a lifelong commitment to learning and are willing to change to improve the present condition. The basic tenets held by such leaders can be encapsulated as follows: 1) You are your own best teacher, 2) Accept responsibility, 3) You can learn anything you want to know, and 4) True understanding comes from reflecting upon your own experiences.[66]

The process undertaken by effective leaders is exemplified by Marty Kaplan, Vice President of Disney Productions. Prior to assuming his position at Disney Productions, Kaplan, who had a varied background but little knowledge about the movie business, designed his own "crash course" by watching five to six movies a day for six weeks. He chose movies from the past several years that were classified as successful. He then read as many scripts as possible to ascertain what qualities made those movies successful. He assumed these tasks in an effort to acquire a sense of the business and the art associated with it. Within

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[64]Peters and Waterman, In Search of Excellence, 25.
[65]Charles Garfield, Peak Performers, (New York: Avon Books, 1987), 143.
[66]Bennis, On Becoming a Leader, 56-60.

one year he was able to perform on the same level as his colleagues, who had spent their entire careers in the movie business. Kaplan attributed his success to self-discipline, a desire to learn, and the transferability of skills.[67]

Like Marty Kaplan, effective leaders will learn whatever is necessary to achieve success. They are single-minded in their drive to move towards success, rather than away from failure. Warren Bennis noted that the ninety leaders he interviewed would use any word, such as "false start", "bug", "glitch", rather than "failure". Leaders who are faced with less than positive results begin by analyzing and learning from their mistakes. They are often able to capitalize upon them.[68] The learning that Kaplan did can be considered "full deployment". He did not simply study the new business. Rather, he became absorbed in it and was able to achieve a complete understanding of all aspects of the business. He demonstrated fearlessness, optimism, and confidence without a fear of failure. Every situation was a learning experience since it was all new to him. Each encounter with other workers was considered useful in his quest for information. Ultimately, he was able to filter the input he received and retain that which was useful to him in his position in the company. In reflecting upon the process of acquiring necessary knowledge for his job, Kaplan clearly understood the basis of self-deployment, as he noted, " Nothing is truly yours until you understand it...leaders learn from others and in the process of synthesizing may do some unlearning in order to improve the self."[69]

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[67]Ibid., 60.
[68]Bennis and Nanus, Leaders, 69.
[69]Bennis, On Becoming a Leader, 61.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The purpose of this study is to determine the extent school superintendents utilize the leadership strategies of vision, communication of culture, trust, and self-deployment. Elementary school districts in the Illinois counties of Cook and DuPage comprised the population of this study. From a total population of one hundred forty-eight districts, twelve districts were chosen to be subjects through the use of stratified random sampling. Within each of the twelve participating districts, interviews were conducted with the superintendent and one principal. The districts were selected by creating four strata constructed by establishing the median of all districts in the population in the areas of student enrollment, identified through average daily attendance figures (ADA) and monies expended per pupil, identified through the local wealth index (LWI). The resulting strata were as follows:

Stratum A = Elementary school districts with an ADA over 1,050 and a LWI over $3,000; thus referred to as "High Attendance and High Wealth" (H.H.)

Stratum B = Elementary school districts with an ADA over 1,050 and a LWI under $3, 000; thus referred to as "High Attendance and Low Wealth" (H.L.)

Stratum C = Elementary school districts with an ADA under 1, 050 and a LWI over $3,000; thus referred to as "Low Attendance and High Wealth" (L.H.)

Stratum D = Elementary school districts with an ADA under 1,050 and a LWI under $3, 000; thus referred to as "Low Attendance and Low Wealth" (L.L.)

Three districts within each stratum were chosen by placing written slips of paper with a district's name on each one in four containers, each representing a stratum. Three slips from each container were then randomly withdrawn to identify

the twelve superintendents who would participate in the study.

The main purpose for creating the strata defined above was to facilitate the selection of a representative sample of elementary school districts within the population to be studied. Differences between strata, therefore, were noted but remained peripheral to the focus of this study--analyzing superintendents' use and integration of the four identified leadership strategies. Due to the fact that the purpose of this study was not to determine the relationship between a school district's size and wealth and the superintendent's use of leadership strategies, discussion of the data as presented in the tables will mainly consider the twelve superintendents and twelve principals as a whole. For purposes of data presentation, the responses were organized by strata and the following four leadership strategies:

STRATEGY I: Attention through vision
STRATEGY II: Meaning through communication(culture)
STRATEGY III: Trust through positioning
STRATEGY IV: Deployment of self

Data of the four strategies are presented according to the following manner: 1) presentation of superintendents' responses, 2) presentation of principals' responses, and 3) analysis of responses of both superintendents and principals.

The Use of Vision as a Leadership Strategy

The first leadership strategy identified for study was that of vision. Questions #1 through #7 related to various components of the use of vision in the role of superintendent. The responses were derived from superintendents' answers to interview questions related to the utilization of vision. If the interviewee indicated use of vision, probing was employed by requesting an explanation. If the response to the probing indicated a definite use of vision, a YES was recorded. If the superintendent stated there

was no use of vision, or if questioning indicated that there was no use of vision, a NO was recorded. The seven questions related to effective use of vision were:

1) stating the district's vision
2) input from employees in formulation of the vision
3) employing of procedures to monitor impact and progress of the vision at all levels of employment
4) emphasizing the major strengths of the district to promote the vision
5) providing feedback procedures regarding the vision
6) providing for change and modification of the vision
7) maintaining momentum for the vision

Data are reported in three sections: 1) presentation of superintendents' responses to the use of vision, 2) presentation of principals' responses to their superintendent's use of vision, and 3) analysis of responses of both superintendents and principals.

Table 1 indicates the number of superintendents and principals in each stratum and the total number of superintendents and principals responding with a YES to each question.

The Use of Vision in the Superintendency as Perceived by the Superintendent

For purposes of reporting and analyzing data that reflect the use of all four leadership strategies to be studied, only the responses from the eight superintendents with an established vision and their principals are presented, with the exception of the vision component, "input for formulation", which includes all twelve superintendents and principals. The four superintendents without an established vision were involved in the process of developing a district vision; consequently, their responses are included in the reporting and analyzing of this component of vision.

Table 1

Yes Responses by Superintendents and Principals Regarding the Use of Vision as a Leadership Strategy in the Superintendency

S = Superintendent P = Principal N = 12

	Number of YES Responses									
Components of Vision	Stratum (H-H) A		Stratum (H-L) B		Stratum (L-H) C		Stratum (L-L) D		Total	
	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P
1. State the vision	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
2. Input for formulation	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	7	7
3. Monitor for progress	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
4. Promote through strengths	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
5. Generate feedback	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
6. Procedures for change	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
7. Maintain momentum	3	3	1	0	3	1	1	0	8	4
Total of YES Responses	20	20	8	7	19	17	8	7	55	51
Total of Possible YES Responses	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	84	84
Percentage of YES Responses	95	95	38	33	90	80	38	33	65	60

Of the twelve superintendents interviewed, eight were able to state the vision of the district. The remaining four stated that their districts were in the process of formulating a vision to provide a direction for the future. One superintendent of the eight reported that he had developed his own vision. He further stated that he accepted the superintendency upon the condition that the board of education accept his vision. The other seven superintendents reported that promoting the district vision as formulated by

committee or board actions was a priority. In all districts studied, the superintendent had the responsibility for coordinating and motivating the stakeholders or board members during the process of creating the vision. Upon the adopting of the vision, they further reported that they held primary responsibility for publicizing and promoting it.

Of the eight superintendents with existing vision statements, three reported that the process of developing the vision required one and a half years to complete. In contrast, four other superintendents stated that their process involved several days. The four superintendents currently developing their visions will require a minimum of one year for completion. Responses to question #1 indicated that while not all superintendents are operating districts with a stated vision, all recognized its importance and were currently involved in the development of such.

The second question concerned employee input into formulation of the vision. Three of the eight superintendents reported that at least fifty individuals, comprised of community leaders, board members, parents, teachers, and administrators, were directly involved in the developmental process. The four superintendents, currently working on creating their visions, reportedly placed a strong emphasis upon involving all stakeholders in the district. The four superintendents with existing visions that had been established for several years, had no involvement from stakeholders in the formulation process. These superintendents had developed the vision with the board of education. The superintendent who assumed the superintendency with his own self-developed vision did not gather input from any of the stakeholders in the district.

Question #3 examined the procedures employed to maintain contact with employees for the purpose of monitoring the impact and progress of the vision in the district. This question evoked a YES response from all eight superintendents. The procedures described by them were highly

similar. The monitoring most reported by the eight superintendents was conducted through the use of input generated through monthly principals' meetings which all districts had established. It was at these meetings that superintendents were able to receive information directly from the principals regarding the progress of the vision in the district. Four of the eight superintendents also maintained a committee composed of teachers that met with them monthly, quarterly, or semi-annually to discuss district accomplishments pertaining to the vision. Three superintendents indicated that they surveyed all employees, including certified and non-certified personnel, on an annual basis to assist them in monitoring the progress of the vision.

Four of the eight superintendents reported that the formal teacher evaluation process played a significant role in monitoring the vision. Teachers were required to be goal-oriented. Therefore, the accomplishment of their goals contributed to the final evaluation. During the summative process, classroom observation conferences provided additional information regarding the success of the vision in the district.

All eight superintendents stated that they employed an "open-door" policy when dealing with employees. These superintendents believed that they welcomed any employee's comments or suggestions regarding the district's vision. Furthermore, these same eight interviewees reported that they utilized informal procedures such as on-site visitations during which time they talked to employees. All eight superintendents confirmed that they responded to written correspondence from any employee who submitted comments about the vision.

Responses to question #4, which addressed the major strengths of the district in promoting the vision, were immediate and strongly expressed by the eight superintendents. They all identified their staff as the

district's greatest strength, describing their employees with such terms as "excellent", "dedicated", "high caliber" and "professional". Four superintendents reported that district staff development programs were effective in moving teachers towards accomplishing the goals established in the vision. Through this process, these districts were able to create "in-district" specialists who assumed responsibility for inservicing other employees. Two superintendents, who had over ten years of superintendency experience in their respective districts, also cited the experience and stability (years of tenure) of their staffs as major strengths. These superintendents held the belief that such teachers were more versatile and more aware of community expectations. Another two superintendents stated that the diversity of backgrounds represented in the staff enriched the district and created additional momentum in achieving the goals set forth in the vision.

Parents were mentioned by three superintendents as a significant strength in promoting their district's vision. Two of these superintendents had generated community and parental help in the development of the vision.

The answers to question #5 involving procedures for receiving feedback on the vision were provided by all eight superintendents. These superintendents answered with much elaboration, pauses, and hesitations. However, they indicated that a system had been devised to provide open feedback to and from all employees. Most of the feedback generated in this process, whether written or verbal, would then be reviewed by a committee which would initiate changes or modifications in the vision as needed.

Question #6 determined if procedures were provided for the change and modification of the district's vision. The eight superintendents responded that any revisions would be formulated from committee recommendations. Such committees were named as "curriculum", "superintendent's", or "advisory" committees. The recommendations brought forth from these

committees would be submitted to the superintendent following an investigation of the possible resulting consequences.

Although all responses to question #6 were answered in the affirmative, differences were noted in the areas of support and commitment.

Six of the eight superintendents, promoted change and modification through a commitment of money and support for growth. These six superintendents stated a belief in the necessity for staff development programs to ensure the success of the vision. They emphasized to employees that mistakes were expected and should result in learning, so as to avoid repetition of errors. The other two superintendents reported that change and modification would occur after committee input but were unable to substantiate follow-through procedures.

The final question referred to maintaining momentum for the vision. All eight superintendents, responded with a "YES" and indicated that momentum was emphasized. However, the degree of superintendent involvement on this subject varied between these respondents. Six superintendents who promoted change and modification through money, support, and staff development, stated in response to question #6, that all their actions supported the vision. Four of the six superintendents were directly involved in extensive committee work over a year's period of time. The participants on the committees represented district volunteer teachers. The superintendent who had formulated the district vision on his own, stated his total commitment to continued emphasis of it. Four of the six superintendents believed that they had to make a total commitment to move the district towards the stated vision. They reported that this was accomplished through high visibility of the superintendent in the schools, usually on a weekly basis. This was felt to be critical for motivation and momentum. They stated that such visits were used to articulate the vision for employees at all levels in the district. The remaining four superintendents identified

themselves as being responsible for maintaining momentum for the vision but did not articulate specific measures that were undertaken to fulfil the responsibility. They expressed a belief in the importance in communicating with employees but did not have an established schedule for visitations. Also, when reportedly engaging employees in conversation, they did not always express the vision. These four superintendents responded that it was the responsibility of the board of education to maintain the momentum by approving programs that led to fulfillment of the vision. For these four superintendents, the level of responsibility for momentum was stated as minimal. These were superintendents who had formulated the vision with the board of education only without additional input from stakeholders.

In summary, all twelve superintendents interviewed believed that a district vision was necessary to provide direction and focus for goals and activities. The eight superintendents who had an established vision, reported that formal and informal feedback was critical, with changes and modifications stemming primarily from committee recommendations. These eight superintendents regarded their staff as the most powerful force in promoting the vision. The same eight interviewees also endorsed staff development as the key element in providing staff members with the skills necessary to attain the district vision.

Twelve superintendents were interviewed and asked seven questions each for a total of eighty-four (84) responses. As indicated in Table I, a total of fifty-five (55) or sixty-five percent (65%) of the total number of responses on the utilization of the strategy of vision, were classified as YES. The stratum percentages ranged from twenty (20) YES responses of a possible twenty-one (21) total for a percentage of ninety-five (95) in Stratum A to a low of thirty-eight percent (38%) which occurred in both Stratum B and Stratum D, each of which had eight (8) YES responses of a possible twenty-one (21).

The Use of Vision in the Superintendency as Perceived by the Principal

In accordance with established procedures and as detailed in Chapter I, both superintendents and principals were administered the same instrument to determine effective use of vision by the superintendent as perceived by the principal. Responses were subjected to the same process of analysis. Data related to principal perceptions of vision are presented in Table 2.

Eight of the twelve principals interviewed responded to question #1 with a YES answer. These eight principals were employed in districts with superintendents who had stated visions. Three principals were able to state the vision accurately and without hesitation. They reported that they perform their duties as principal in accordance with the goals set forth in the vision. The superintendent's reiterating of the vision on a frequent basis at meetings and other professional gatherings was also noted by these principals. Four principals who represented districts in which the superintendent and the board of education formulated the vision, expressed support for it but were unable to verbalize how the vision related directly to their job responsibilities. The same four principals further reported that their superintendent restated the vision on an occasional basis, most particularly when addressing a group about future district needs. The one principal who represented the district in which the superintendent formulated his own vision replied that he felt committed to it and willingly supported the vision. He stated that the vision was strongly emphasized by the superintendent. The remaining four principals whose superintendents were in the process of formulating a vision through committee work were able to state portions of the vision that had been completed to date. Two of these four principals had developed a building level

vision as a focus for educational achievement while the district level vision was nearing completion.

YES responses to question #2 regarding formulation of the vision were identical for superintendents and principals. Both groups were in agreement about the amount of input that had been contributed to the development of the vision. In the four districts currently formulating visions, superintendents and principals agreed about the process, stating that they recognized the length of time required and the necessity for involving an adequate number of people representing various groups. These four principal respondents identified the input phase as particularly critical for implementing the vision.

In response to question #3, eight of the principals indicated that their superintendents relied upon monthly administrative meetings with the principals for feedback on the district vision. They further reported that they were expected to provide input on the vision at these meetings and experienced stress due to the resulting pressure. Of the eight principals, four also indicated that their superintendents maintained chairmanship of their own committees, which reported on progress of the vision. The teacher evaluation process was cited by the same four principals as the source of input on vision progress for their districts. Three of these interviewees also indicated that their superintendents reviewed results of annual formal staff surveys as a means of redirecting or reinforcing efforts towards achievement of vision goals.

Question # 4 related to identified strengths of the district in promoting the vision resulted in all eight principals agreeing with their superintendents. The respondents from both groups, principals and superintendents, expressed the belief that the professional staff was the major strength of the district in achieving vision goals. Furthermore, the eight principals stated that it was their responsibility to provide the direct support and monitoring needed to move the staff towards meeting the goals of the

vision. These eight respondents indicated that superintendents viewed staff development programs as the primary means of improving staff expertise to the level necessary for achievement of the vision. The eight principals stated that their superintendents clearly expected "in-house" experts to be developed through "out-of-district" training of staff members. Sharing of new techniques and information was common in all districts and expected by the superintendents. All eight of the principals also believed that they were responsible for identifying and motivating individuals who were capable of providing instructional leadership. Three principals stated that their superintendents regarded parental support as a major strength for accomplishing goals of the vision.

The eight interviewees responded to question #5 relating to procedures for feedback with a YES. Three principals stated that non-certified staff members could contact the superintendent for an appointment by sending a written request if they had a concern. However, the other five principals reported that non-certified employees were not provided with a means to participate in the feedback process. Most feedback was generated by teachers, who served on committees. While written comments were submitted upon occasion, the principals believed that staff members were uncomfortable with stating opinions in writing, particularly those of a negative nature. Most feedback was channeled through teacher representatives on committees or through the principals. Four of the eight were from districts whose superintendents chaired their own committees with district staff representation expressed the belief that this setting provided the most direct feedback. The eight principals also stated that although superintendents professed to have an "open door" policy for gathering direct feedback from individuals, most teachers preferred to remain anonymous. All eight believed that causes continued to be served through the committee process.

Results of question #6 indicated that eight principals believed the superintendent had clearly delineated the procedures available for change and modification of the vision. In addition to providing feedback on the vision, the district committees were also structured to modify and revise the vision as necessary. The four principals whose superintendents were currently developing vision statements also indicated that change occurs through committee action. The principals reported that changes or modifications accepted by their superintendents resulted in visible strong support. Staff development projects would receive additional finances, resulting in high quality programs that ultimately ensured the success of the revised vision goals. Two principals also agreed with their superintendent that successful staff development provided the means to improve, augment, and further develop the district's vision. However, these same two principals stated that limited funds required their superintendents to carefully set priorities on what needs would be addressed to best achieve vision goals.

The final question on vision related to maintaining momentum for the vision. Four of the eight principals reported that the superintendent assumed a major role in providing momentum for the vision through frequent verbalizing and conversing about it. The four respondents believed that this resulted in every staff member's awareness of the vision. The heightened awareness allowed the vision to permeate every facet of the instructional program. These four principals could recite the vision and were informed about the expectations placed upon all individuals to achieve vision goals. The superintendents of these four principals were noted for maintaining a regular visitation schedule to the district schools, usually on bi-weekly basis.

The other four principals reported that the vision was not frequently verbalized or emphasized throughout the year. They expressed the concern that daily activities were often without focus due to the lack of emphasis of the vision.

Superintendents in these districts did not maintain a visitation schedule. Visits were sporadic. These four principals believed that the task of maintaining momentum had become their responsibility.

Of the four districts currently developing vision statements, principals in two districts reported regular visits from their superintendents, but noted that progress on the vision formulation process was not related to them. They did not see the superintendent as providing momentum for the vision currently in development due to the lack of information being relayed. The other two principals received information about the progress of vision formulation from committee members rather than the superintendent.

In summary, all eight principals whose superintendent had a stated vision, agreed with their superintendents on the majority of the components related to the strategy of vision. Responses to the component of momentum indicated the greatest amount of discrepancy.

Twelve principals were interviewed and were asked seven questions each for a total of eighty-four (84) responses. As indicated in Table 1, a total of fifty-one (51) or sixty (60) percent of the responses were YES. The stratum percentages ranged from a high of ninety-five (95) percent with twenty (20) YES responses of a possible 21 responses in Strata A to a low of thirty-three (33) percent with seven (7) YES responses of a possible 21 responses in Strata B and Strata D.

Analysis of Data Regarding the Use of Vision in the Superintendency as Perceived by the Superintendent and the Principal

Seven interview questions related to the effective use of vision by the superintendent were included in the interview instrument. The responses of both the superintendents and principals are presented in Table 1.

A district vision provides the basis for expressing what a school district is about, what it represents, and the goals towards which it is striving. Focusing and engaging in activities that result in successful achievement of the goals is strategic leadership. Without a district vision, such leadership is rendered impossible. Of the twelve superintendents interviewed, eight had an established district vision. The remaining four superintendents were in the process of developing a vision. As indicated in Table 1, YES responses from both superintendents and principals with a stated vision were highly similar. However, four principals, whose districts had an established vision, stated that they were performing their jobs without clear guidelines or knowledge of the superintendent's expectations, indicating that the mere development of a district vision was not sufficient to promote its goals. These principals reported inconsistent and infrequent communication with the superintendent as the reason for the lack of direction they were experiencing. In contrast, three principals reported that their superintendent consistently articulated the district vision and related it to the job performances and expectations of not only the principals, but all levels of employees within the district. The frequent articulating of the vision by the superintendent in these districts provided a solid foundation upon which employees could adjust and adapt their behaviors to meet the stated goals.

Successful leaders in the field of education involve their constituencies in the process of vision formulation. Seven superintendents and their principals indicated that stakeholders were key elements in the vision formulation process. Of these seven, the four superintendents who were currently developing a vision for their district recognized the value of such input and had made provisions to include representatives from all groups involved with the schools. All seven superintendents and their principals, whether the district vision had been previously developed or was in the

formulation process, observed that stakeholder input provided needed information about community and employee values and beliefs. As a result, they were better able to commit to the vision goals with enthusiasm and pride in their accomplishments.

Of the five districts whose superintendents had developed the vision without input from stakeholders, four principals expressed a less intense commitment towards meeting the stated vision, often viewing it as an imposed standard for evaluation. It is interesting to note that in one district, the superintendent had developed the district vision in isolation, without input from stakeholders or the board of education. However, the principal interviewed from this district surprisingly indicated a strong commitment to and support of the superintendent's vision. Although he was not provided with the opportunity to participate in the development of the vision and was aware that the superintendent had assumed the sole responsibility for this task, he had a strong personal belief in the values expressed in the vision and was thus able to lend support to it.

All superintendents appeared to monitor the progress of the district vision, as indicated in the responses by both the superintendents and principals. Variance occurred in the extent and variety of the sources used by the superintendents to assess progress. In all strata, feedback from the principals was the primary source of information for the superintendents. Principals were viewed as the direct link between teachers and the superintendent and were thus able to provide an accurate assessment of accomplishments. This information was transmitted to the superintendent during regularly scheduled administrative meetings. However, four superintendents relied upon additional sources of input to monitor the progress of the vision. They maintained chairmanship positions on district committees, gathered feedback through annual staff surveys, and reviewed comments on teacher evaluation instruments. Furthermore, three su-

perintendents also surveyed non-certificated staff members in an attempt to accurately assess the impact and progress of the vision throughout the district and at all levels of employment. In contrast, the remaining two superintendents restricted their sources to the principals and concerned themselves with certified staff members only.

The motivation behind the superintendents' reliance upon principal input for monitoring the progress of the vision in the schools is apparent in the responses to the question regarding promoting district strengths. Superintendents and principals from all strata cited the teaching staff as the major strength of the district. Therefore, the assessing of teacher progress towards accomplishing the goals set forth in the vision became an important means of promoting it. All superintendents held the belief that vision goals were promoted through extensive staff development activities. The principals were in agreement that their superintendents placed significant importance to teacher training as a means of furthering the district vision. It should be noted that while all superintendents named the teaching staff as critical for the successful attainment of the vision goals, three superintendents also mentioned parent and community members as sources of strength. They regarded these individuals as key supporters who also promoted the district vision. Consequently, these superintendents involved community members by maintaining an open and direct line of communication.

Responses to interview questions involving the components of input for vision formulation and generating of feedback revealed notable similarities. For most superintendents, the process of developing the vision included input from all groups involved in the school system. The generating of feedback also required input from district stakeholders. All respondents indicated that such input was primarily generated through district committees. However, superintendents and principals reported that feedback

considered to be negative or critical in nature was usually transmitted through committee work, while positive comments were most often shared with the superintendent by individuals. Utilizing committees for the purpose of generating feedback thus allowed for a more honest appraisal system. The relative anonymity of a group meeting provided the setting needed for individuals with concerns or criticisms to express themselves without fear of reprisal. Procedures for generating feedback from non-certified personnel were closely aligned with those for monitoring progress of the vision. Three superintendents publicly welcomed input from non-certificated staff members and established the necessary procedures to ensure feedback. Superintendents representing all other strata professed to eliciting input from all district personnel including non-certified; however, principals reported that procedures for doing so were unavailable for employees at this level. Without a clearly defined system for relaying the comments and concerns of all district employees, the feedback generated on a more limited basis would not provide all the information needed for effective decision-making by the superintendent.

Establishing procedures for change, as a component of vision, was closely linked with staff development and professional growth opportunities by all superintendents. They expressed a commitment to furthering the goals of the vision by providing specialized coursework, seminars, and training for the teaching staff. Principals recognized this as a goal held by their superintendent. The extent to which the individual superintendents fulfilled this commitment varied in relation to wealth. Most of the superintendents had access to the funding necessary to implement programs designed specifically to modify behaviors, develop new techniques, and reinforce appropriate skills of the instructional staff. While two superintendents viewed such activities as important to successful attainment of the vision goals, they were unable to develop the kinds of extensive, high quality

programs that would result in a significant change in teacher behaviors. The limitations imposed upon superintendents by the financial conditions of their particular district apparently impacted upon the effectiveness of their leadership skills in this area. Principals from the lower wealth districts recognized the restrictions faced by the superintendent, but expressed concern about teachers' frustrations over the lack of appropriate training available to them.

Maintaining momentum towards meeting the goals of the vision required the superintendents to reach the staff on an emotional level. Stating the vision, gathering input, monitoring progress, and setting the stage for change were components that allowed for greater understanding and ability to meet the vision goals. Inspiring personnel to continue striving towards the stated vision was identified as a key factor for successful leadership by four superintendents and their principals. These four principals praised their superintendent for providing a sense of passion regarding the vision. They described their superintendent as persuasive and convincing about the need to attain the goals of the vision. The frequency of communication with the superintendent on issues directly addressing the vision was also cited by these principals as an effective method of keeping the vision alive. These four superintendents were seen as relentless pursuers of the district vision, articulating it whenever contact with made with employees. By inspiring and challenging the staff, they encouraged people to initiate the changes necessary to achieve the vision goal. A sense of team spirit was pervasive throughout the district and at all levels of employment. In this component, wealth of the district did not ensure momentum. Two superintendents were not viewed as impassioned about their commitment to the district vision. The principals from these districts had difficulty articulating the vision, having had less communication with the superintendent about it. Principals

from the remaining districts fared even worse in their ability to maintain enthusiasm about the vision. Superintendents in these districts reportedly had infrequent communication and follow-through on issues related to the vision goals. Their principals mirrored the often repeated sentiments of their superintendents that lack of funding for needed projects greatly hampered progress. These individuals appeared mired in the limitations imposed by this situation and had lost sight of the purpose of the vision. The superintendents were unable to maintain the momentum the principals needed to continue strongly supporting the vision.

The importance of vision in effective leadership is supported by the data presented and analyzed in this chapter. Warren Bennis states that a vision provides an organization with a clear sense of purpose, direction, and a desired future state. By focusing attention on a vision, the leader operates on the emotional and spiritual resources of the organization, and its values, commitments, and aspirations. Vision allows the leader to inspire employees by demonstrating to them how their work contributes to worthwhile ends.[1] Effective superintendents in the study utilized the district vision to provide the leadership described by Bennis. Furthermore, the results indicated that effective superintendents proceeded beyond the mere development of a vision statement to the active pursuit of the vision goals. The importance of using the vision to promote the organization's goals is supported by the work of Craig Hickman and Michael Silva. They state that the visionary leader motivates employees to embrace the vision through persuasion and modeling. Effective leadership, according to Hickman and Silva, involves regular contact with all levels of employees to gather input and insight into the progress of the vision. Leaders also reinforce and concentrate upon the strengths of the organization and are at

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[1]Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, Leaders (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1985), 90-91.

the center of the action.[2] The study revealed that effective superintendents demonstrated such characteristics through interactions with staff members that led to the promoting and reinforcing of the district vision.

The Use of Communication of Culture as a Leadership Strategy

The second leadership strategy identified for study was that of communication of culture. The unifying theme that provides meaning, direction, and mobilization is culture. It supplies a common understanding and an avenue for constructing sense out of events and symbols and also displays values that justify behaviors which are to be encouraged, as well as, those behaviors to be excluded. Five interview questions comprised the component relating to communication of culture. The questioning technique remained the same as that stated under the strategy of "vision". Questions involved the following:

1) developing procedures for understanding and recognizing behaviors that promote the vision
2) establishing procedures for promoting change
3) developing sanctioning procedures that foster and reinforce desired behaviors
4) establishing procedures to attract and keep employees
5) assuming an active part in fostering change

Data are reported in three sections: 1) presentation of superintendents' responses to the use of culture, 2) presentation of principals' responses to their superintendent's use of culture, and 3) analysis of responses of both superintendents and principals.

Table 2 indicates the number of superintendents and principals in each stratum and the total number of

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[2]Craig R. Hickman and Michael Silva, Creating Excellence (New York: Penguin Books, Inc., 1984), 160-161.

superintendents and principals responding with a YES to each question.

The Use of Culture as a Leadership Strategy As Perceived by the Superintendent

For successful attainment of a vision, an essential first step is ensuring that employees understand acceptable behaviors and why they are identified as such. Behaviors, manners, and ideas must all focus upon and promote the vision. The sampling used for purposes of analysis was limited to the eight superintendents of the twelve who reported a stated vision currently in place. The communication of a culture that promoted a vision required that one had been developed.

Responses to question #1 involving the defining for employees the appropriate behaviors that promote the vision were all affirmative. All eight superintendents reported that extensive screening and interviewing procedures were employed by their principals to match the prospective candidates to the existing culture. Final hiring decisions were the responsibility of the superintendent, with the exception of one respondent, who believed that this should be assumed by the principal as the person directly involved with the teachers. All superintendents stated that the behaviors they sought in a candidate were a positive attitude and a willingness to learn--all behaviors necessary to create a culture that promoted the vision. One superintendent reported that he did not expect a prospective employee to be able to identify district expectations. Rather, he believed that it is the function of staff training sessions to assist new faculty in understanding what is required. The newly employed individual's responsibility lies in his or her full participation in the training activities. For all eight superintendents, the nature of the training for new staff members involved orientation meetings in which basic

Table 2

Yes Responses by Superintendents and Principals Regarding Communication of Culture as a Leadership Strategy in the Superintendency

S = Superintendent P = Principal N = 12

Components of Culture	Number of YES Responses									
	Stratum (H-H) A		Stratum (H-L) B		Stratum (L-H) C		Stratum (L-L) D		Total	
	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P
1. Ensure appropriate behaviors	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
2. Promote change	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
3. Sanction behaviors	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
4. Attract/keep employees	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
5. Foster change	3	3	1	0	3	1	1	0	8	4
Total of YES Responses	15	15	5	4	15	13	5	4	40	36
Total of Possible YES Responses	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	60	60
Percentage of YES Responses	100	100	33	26	100	86	33	26	66	60

guidelines, rules, policies, and practices were defined. Four respondents also emphasized the use of a mentoring program which assigned teachers identified as outstanding educators to new teachers as a means of support and guidance. Two superintendents acknowledged the local teachers' union for communicating the culture to new teachers.

In response to question #2, all eight superintendents considered informal input to be a valuable means of receiving candid feedback from employees about the district culture. These superintendents related that employees were more

relaxed in informal situations and, consequently, more open with the information being shared. Six superintendents maintained that direct contact with staff was of utmost importance. These six respondents maintained that their participation on teachers' bowling teams or through dinner meetings provided feedback and established a sense of caring for the employees. The six superintendents employed "coffee hours" at local restaurants and lunchroom discussions with non-certified staff in an effort to continue explaining the expectations set forth by the district's vision. "After-hours" activities were common practices for these superintendents.

All eight superintendents reported that an important source of information was the principal. Input from the principals' group was generated through curriculum or staff development sessions. Two superintendents circulated books and articles on innovative programs and activities in an effort to stimulate new ideas that supported vision goals. These two superintendents viewed the publicizing and promoting of culture as a primary focus.

Procedures for reinforcing desired behaviors were established by all superintendents. Each described annual events that featured the honoring of teachers for certain attainments, such as retirement, perfect attendance and outstanding achievement. Board of education meetings provided additional opportunities to recognize successes. However, one superintendent noted that awards presented by the board of education were largely ineffective due to the repetitive nature of the process. All eight superintendents named the State of Illinois "Those Who Excel" award program for recognizing exceptional achievement in the field of education as a positive means for rewarding deserving personnel. Four of the superintendents also identified monthly district newsletters as a vehicle for recognizing exceptional individuals. Personal messages complimenting an individual on a specific accomplishment was identified by four

superintendents as the most effective and valuable means of rewarding employees. All eight interviewees believed that many teachers are uncomfortable with public recognition but are, nonetheless, pleased to receive it.

Attracting and keeping employees was the focus of question #4. All superintendents named competitive pay scales and good benefit packages as key factors related to success in this area. Six superintendents also cited professional growth opportunities as an important employee benefit. Four of the six superintendents offered a complete Master's degree program in conjunction with a university by completing coursework presented through the district. These superintendents also encouraged teachers to write articles for publication and to present workshops and inservices. All of the activities named by the six superintendents were viewed as professional growth and supported financially.

All eight superintendents reported a deep concern for employees as individuals. They ascribed such attributes to themselves as "good listener", "helpful in times of need", and "concerned". Six of the eight superintendents established a district-wide function, such as a dance or picnic, as a means of promoting a positive culture.

Each superintendent stated in response to question #5 that he/she assumed an active part in fostering change. All of the eight superintendents viewed themselves as the district's educational leader. Five of the eight superintendents participated in workshops with teachers and in other related activities. It was their stated belief that modeling was critical as a means of reinforcing the process of change. Visitations to schools were considered to be important by all eight superintendents to ensure validity to their comments regarding program change. However, only four of the eight superintendents reported a weekly visitation schedule.

In summary, all eight superintendents who had an established vision, regarded the interview process as an

important means of maintaining the district's culture. These eight superintendents stated that recognition of staff members at various events was beneficial, with a personal message producing the most lasting effects. They considered professional growth opportunities and a positive working environment as critical in attracting and keeping employees. All eight superintendents viewed themselves as the educational leader of their district.

The purpose of the reported data was to determine the superintendent's use of communication of culture as a leadership strategy. Twelve superintendents were interviewed and presented with five questions each for a total of sixty (60) responses. As indicated in Table 2, a total of forty (40) or sixty-six (66) percent of the responses were YES. The stratum percentages ranged from one hundred (100) percent with fifteen (15) YES responses of a possible fifteen (15) responses in Stratum A and Stratum C, to a low of thirty-three (33) percent with five (5) YES responses of a possible fifteen (15) YES responses in Stratum B and Stratum D.

The Communication of Culture in the Superintendency as Perceived by the Principal

As in the previous section on the superintendents' perceptions of communication of culture, the data represent the responses of the eight principals whose superintendents had a stated vision for the district. The same interviewing instrument and process of analysis were employed. Results are presented in Table 2.

In response to question #1, all eight principals reported that they were given the responsibility by the superintendent to employ teachers who were most likely to perpetuate the culture of the district. The eight respondents stated that the process of hiring the best candidate involved informing teachers of why they were chosen for the position and clearly indicating the responsibilities they would have

for their professional growth through staff development activities. Four of the eight principals reported having established a mentoring program to assist new teachers during the first year, considered to be a critical time for formulation of behaviors. All respondents utilized district support personnel and direct supervision as methods of ensuring that first year teachers were successful. Six principals were expected by their superintendents to restate and reinforce acceptable behaviors at every faculty meeting. All eight principals also reported the teacher evaluation instrument as another tool used to monitor assimilation of culture.

Responses to question #2, involving procedures to promote change, revealed that all eight of the principals cited the establishing of formal committees as a priority. Four of the eight principals had formulated committees of volunteer teachers to examine conflict management, staff development, and problem solving. All principals believed that the sharing of power, or teacher empowerment, was effective, particularly when tenured teachers were involved. They noted that such involvement at the inception of an idea resulted in greater committee productivity. The formal structure of the committees provided a dependable source of information for the principals to discuss needed changes with their superintendents. Informal sources of information as would be gathered at faculty social functions was reported by three principals to be useful. In contrast, five principals found such sources to be inconsistent in credibility and reliability.

The principals' responses to question #3, which related to the fostering and reinforcing of desired behaviors, indicated that all eight unanimously supported their superintendent's use of personal praise followed by a letter as the most effective and appreciated form of reinforcement. Three principals noted that their superintendents reminded them of the importance of positive public relations.

Consequently, these three school administrators reportedly seized every opportunity for public affirmation of outstanding achievement by a staff member. Their teachers were also rewarded through opportunities to attend workshops or conventions to further develop their expertise. Two principals stated that teachers who had exhibited high achievement were accorded more responsibility. This was viewed as an effective reward, particularly for tenured teachers for whom monetary incentives alone were not motivating. All eight respondents reported that their superintendents placed a high value in public recognition at such functions as staff dinners, district inservice days, or board of education meetings. In contrast, the principals noted that public recognitions were for the audience rather than for the benefit of the individual being cited.

In question #4 on attracting and keeping effective employees, all eight principals were in agreement that applicants for positions were plentiful. Six principals indicated that their superintendent allowed them to employ the most qualified individuals with full credit on the salary schedule for prior experience. The opportunities for professional growth and achievement emphasized by their superintendent were cited by these six principals as key factors in attracting qualified individuals and in keeping them employed in the district. A competitive salary schedule and staff development programs were also named as the superintendent's primary means of employing quality teachers by two respondents.

Responses to question #5 on fostering change indicated that four of the eight principals viewed the superintendent as the primary catalyst for fostering change in the district. These four principals reported having a close professional relationship with their superintendent that developed through participation in staff development programs. These four also believed that the superintendent maintained an awareness of the culture in the district by active involvement in program

activities. The remaining four principals stated that their superintendents participated in staff development functions on a limited basis and did not pursue follow-up visits to the schools on a regular basis. These four principals perceived themselves as the agents for fostering change.

In summarizing principals' perceptions of the communication of culture, results indicated that principals were held responsible by their superintendent for ensuring appropriate behaviors by requiring them to select teacher candidates who would most likely perpetuate the culture. Their superintendents expected them to use and depend upon committees for regular and reliable information concerning necessary changes. These eight principals stated that personal contact with a staff member was the most effective reinforcer of proper behavior. Four of the eight principals interviewed regarded their superintendent as the educational leader of the district.

The data cited above relate the superintendent's effectiveness in communicating the culture as a leadership strategy, as perceived by the principal. Twelve principals were interviewed and asked five questions for a total of sixty responses. As Table 2 indicates, a total of thirty-six (36) or sixty (60) percent of the responses were YES. The percentages ranged from a high of one hundred (100) percent with fifteen (15) YES responses of a possible fifteen (15) in Stratum A to a low percentage of twenty-six (26) percent in Stratum D.

Analysis of Data Regarding the Use of Communication of Culture As a Leadership Strategy As Perceived by Superintendents and Principals

Five questions were included in the interview instrument to gather data for the leadership strategy of communication of culture. The responses of both the superintendents and principals are presented in Table 2.

In accomplishing the goals set forth by the district's stated vision, culture is a critical component which must be communicated by the superintendent to establish meaning and direction. Culture provides an avenue for projecting the values that reinforce appropriate behaviors and discouraging those behaviors that are counterproductive to meeting district goals. Through the communication of the district's culture by the superintendent, staff members are able to identify desired behaviors and gain recognition for displaying such. The communication of culture provides for the adaptations and revisions necessary to further the district vision by establishing procedures for promoting change. Through the superintendent's use of communication of culture, employees who are willing and capable of promoting the stated vision are identified, nurtured, and encouraged to remain employed with the district. Without this component, the superintendent would be unable to lead the district towards accomplishing the goals set forth in the vision.

Responses from both superintendents and principals in all strata identified the teacher interviewing process as a primary means of encouraging behaviors that maintained the culture. Principals representing all strata were aware of the superintendent's emphasis upon employing teachers who displayed appropriate behaviors, supported the vision, and were willing to learn and accept the culture of the district. By expecting principals to select such individuals, the superintendents were assured that the behaviors they believed perpetuated the culture would be encouraged. Principals were in agreement and viewed the superintendent's hiring requirements as evidence of his/her communication of the district's culture. The hiring of individuals who appeared to be capable of maintaining the culture of the district was the initial step in the process of ensuring appropriate behaviors. Following the employment process, superintendents used staff development programs to ensure that new employees were provided with the training necessary to learn the behaviors

that supported the existing culture. Principals relied upon such programs to further develop the skills of the individuals they had recommended for employment, which allowed for greater freedom in selecting candidates whom they viewed as "high potential" for supporting the district vision. Four principals were also expected to implement a mentoring program for new staff to guide and support them during their introduction to the district culture. All principals reported utilizing support personnel, as well as, the teacher evaluation process to assist new employees in the process of assimilating the district culture. Six of the principals indicated that their superintendent expected them to restate and reinforce acceptable behaviors during all their faculty meetings. The consistency of responses in this component between superintendents and principals and across all strata indicates the importance of the interview process and subsequent training activities for teacher candidates. Principals assumed a major role in perpetuating the culture set forth by the superintendent by having to identify candidates who had the potential to develop behaviors consistent with the district culture and by providing the guidance necessary to learn such behaviors. While the superintendent had the responsibility for communicating the culture, it was apparent that they viewed the principals as key elements in ensuring that teachers were willing and able to support it. The principals were willing to assume this role with the resources and support provided by the superintendent.

Procedures for promoting change as a component of the communication of culture, were viewed somewhat differently between some of the superintendents and their principal. While all agreed that procedures had been established for the purpose of promoting change, there was disagreement regarding the relative value of formal versus informal sources of information. All of the superintendents placed confidence in the merits of utilizing informal settings to promote change

through persuasion. The majority of superintendents were particularly emphatic regarding the use of this practice. All eight superintendents believed they were able to perpetuate the culture and promote the vision by involving themselves in situations that allowed employees to formulate a more personal image of the superintendent. The opportunity to view the superintendent as a caring, interested individual who was an active participant with them in meeting the vision goals, created a staff more willing and motivated to accept change. The superintendents who were particularly strong in their support of such activities, maintained regularly scheduled opportunities for interacting with all staff members which further reinforced perceptions of them as being committed to the vision goals. By creating a culture of open and informal communication between superintendent and staff, the superintendent also gained the feedback necessary for determining what, if any, changes were required to accomplish the goals of the vision. The area of disagreement between superintendents and principals emanated from the validity of information gained in these situations. Four principals regarded input from staff that was transmitted informally as often unreliable and not the most efficient method for gathering the information needed to prescribe change. Although three principals acknowledged the credibility gained by the superintendent through direct and frequent communication with the staff, they were in agreement with the other five principals that the primary source of information used by the superintendent to promote change should be sought through the monthly principals' meeting. The discrepancy between principals and superintendents in response to what sources of information should be the catalyst for change reflected the concern of the principals that the feedback the superintendent gained through direct contact with the staff may be inaccurate or misconstrued. Their role as building administrator established them as the link between the superintendent and the staff, which they viewed as possibly

weakened by the superintendent's enacting changes based upon direct staff input without acknowledging the value of interpretation by the principals' group. Had the principals believed that changes would be implemented by the superintendent's consideration of both sources of information, they may have been in closer agreement with the procedures that had been established. While the superintendents did not indicate the use of informal sources of feedback as the sole determinant for implementing changes, the underlying perception of the principals was that they were not considered as important a source of information as their staff members. Consequently, principals were compelled to diminish the value of staff input in the process of determining change.

The superintendents unanimously supported public recognition as the primary method for fostering and reinforcing desired behaviors. With six of the eight superintendents strongly supporting the recognizing of staff accomplishments through the newspaper, newsletters, and district social functions, it is apparent that culture is often transmitted by this public reward system. As with any effective system for reinforcing behaviors, a variety of rewards were reportedly used by the superintendents to encourage staff members. In addition to written and verbal pronouncements about specific accomplishments, the superintendents, through the principals, reinforced behaviors by encouraging those individuals to attend workshops, conferences, and conventions. Inherent in the offering of such opportunities to particular individuals was the recognition that they had displayed the skills and motivation necessary to implement the new strategies presented at the workshops or conventions. The superintendents further identified and sanctioned appropriate behaviors among the staff by placing such individuals in positions of some authority, such as chairmanships of district committees or presenters at district inservice training sessions. While superintendents

placed a high value on public recognition as an effective means of reinforcing the behaviors needed to create a culture that supported the district vision, it is through the identifying and enriching of the strongest staff members that the behaviors become understood by other staff members. The occasional newspaper article or the accolades presented by the superintendent at a district dinner dance may spur the recipient to continue his or her efforts. However, the opportunity to advance themselves professionally through the workshops they are encouraged to attend and, subsequently, being allowed to demonstrate and teach the skills to their peers appears to be more critical to sanctioning those important behaviors.

As a component of culture, the attracting and keeping of effective employees is critical in accomplishing district goals. All superintendents cited a competitive salary and excellent benefits as the basis for employing strong candidates and keeping them in the district. Some of the superintendents also offered a multitude of professional growth opportunities, such as on-site Master's Degree programs, attendance at state and national conventions, and in-district training by experts in their particular field. These superintendents were also able to offer full credit on the salary schedule to those candidates with extensive experience. It is apparent that this particular component of culture is largely subject to the size and wealth of the individual districts rather than the leadership demonstrated by the superintendent. On-site Master's Degree programs are seldom available in districts with small numbers of employees, as universities require a prescribed minimum of participants. Without the cooperation of surrounding districts to participate in a joint venture, the superintendent is unable to lure prospective employees with promises of an on-site graduate degree program. Other attractants, such as full credit for years of experience, attendance at high-cost state and national conventions, or

well-renowned consultants for district staff development activities, are also mostly unavailable to low attendance and/or low wealth districts. While an enterprising superintendent from such a district may overcome some of the financial barriers, the hiring and keeping of the most qualified candidates is apparently far easier for those superintendents who have the district funds available to offer an attractive array of monetary and professional benefits.

All superintendents perceived the fostering of change, a component of culture, as a role which they assumed. However, not all principals agreed with the perception of their superintendent as the primary promoter of change in the district. The superintendents and principals both viewed the superintendent's close involvement in building level activities as a measurement of his/her role in fostering change. The four principals who believed their superintendent was responsible for initiating change had reported that he/she maintained a high level of visibility in the schools. Superintendents in these districts conversed frequently with the principals and staff members, often during on-site visits. Consequently, superintendents who attend staff development training sessions or other building programs in addition to maintaining close contact with the individual schools, are viewed as having the insight needed to determine what, if any, changes are required to further district goals. The remaining four principals acknowledged that their superintendent attended staff development sessions, but believed that inconsistency in appearances diminished the superintendent's ability to foster change. They believed that the lack of regularly scheduled or infrequent school visits adversely affected the superintendent's role in recognizing the need for promoting change. The area of disagreement between the superintendents and principals was not in defining the activities with which the superintendents should become involved but was, rather, the extent of the involvement

needed to assume the responsibility for fostering change. In the process of fostering change in the district, the effectiveness of the superintendent's role is lessened when principals perceive that proposed changes are based upon inadequate feedback. While all superintendents believed their level of involvement allowed for sufficient information, it is apparent that the superintendents who maintained a consistent visitation schedule were in a better position to foster change in the district.

The data presented and reported on the use of communication of culture support the critical role it plays in effective leadership. A leader is the most visible symbol of the organization's vision[3]. As such, his/her behaviors are closely observed, requiring the leader to model appropriate behaviors. As stated by Tichy and Ulrich, culture does not occur randomly. Culture can be shaped by monitoring how and where time is spent, and by encouraging employees to behave in ways that support the vision[4]. Effective superintendents in the study participated in the tasks that were expected of employees. They were highly visible in the schools on a regularly scheduled basis which provided opportunities to model and communicate the expectations for staff behaviors. The high level of involvement in district activities by the superintendent enabled the culture to be communicated through employee emulation of his/her behaviors. Effective superintendents were also recognized by their employment practices. One of the most subtle yet potent ways in which a culture becomes embedded and perpetuated is through the initial selection of its new members[5]. The superintendents in the study clearly expected that new teachers be hired on the

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[3]Jay A. Conger, The Charismatic Leader (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989), 119.
[4]Noel M. Tichy and David O. Ulrich, "The Leadership Challenge--A Call for the Transformational Leader", Sloan Management Review 26 (Fall, 1984): 67.
[5]Edgar H. Schein, Organizational Culture and Leadership (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989), 235.

basis of their perceived ability to assume the values and beliefs held by the district and stated in the vision. Once employed, teachers were encouraged and motivated through personal recognition by the superintendent. Effective leaders give a sense of heart to the culture by recognizing employee contributions to the fulfillment of the vision[6]. Effective superintendents demonstrated their appreciation through consistent recognition of accomplishments. The rewarding of behaviors that perpetuated the goals of the district vision instilled in the employees a clear sense of their importance in the organization.

The study determined that the superintendents created a strong and functional culture through careful selection of new teachers, by participating with staff members in activities that promoted the vision, through a consistent system of rewarding appropriate behaviors, and by frequent contact with employees. The resulting culture provided a guide to direct employees towards a common goal--the realization of the district vision.

The Use of Trust Through Positioning As a Leadership Strategy

The third leadership strategy in this study is trust through positioning. Trust is the knowledge of the leader's expectations and is generated through understanding, predictability, and a clear commitment to the vision. Six interview questions comprised the component relating to trust. The questioning techniques and analysis procedures remained the same as in the two previously reported strategies.

Questions related to trust were as follows:

1) employing procedures to present commitment to the vision
2) promoting visibility and personal contact with employees

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[6]Robert H. Hayes, "Strategic Planning: Forward in Reverse" Harvard Business Review (November/December 1985), 113.

3) sharing information pertaining to expectations and progress with employees
4) trusting input from employees
5) following through on promises and commitments
6) generating an expertise that instills trust in employees

Data are reported in three sections: 1) presentation of superintendents' responses to the use of trust, 2) presentation of principals' responses to their

Table 3

Yes Responses by Superintendents and Principals Regarding the Use of Trust as a Leadership Strategy in the Superintendency

S = Superintendent P = Principal N = 12

	Number of YES Responses									
Components of Vision	Stratum (H-H) A		Stratum (H-L) B		Stratum (L-H) C		Stratum (L-L) D		Total	
	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P
1. Employ commitment	3	3	1	0	3	1	1	0	8	4
2. Promote visibility/contact	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
3. Share information	3	3	1	0	3	3	1	0	8	6
4. Trust employee input	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
5. Follow-through	3	3	1	1	3	2	1	0	8	6
6. Generate expertise	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
Total of YES Responses	18	18	6	4	18	15	6	3	48	40
Total of Possible YES Responses	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	72	72
Percentage of YES Responses	100	100	33	22	100	83	33	16	66	55

superintendent's use of trust, and 3) analysis of responses of both superintendents and principals.

Table 3 indicates the number of superintendents and principals in each stratum and the total number of superintendents and principals responding with a YES to each question.

The Use of Trust Through Positioning in the Superintendency As Perceived by the Superintendent

Trust in a leader's behaviors as they relate to stated organizational goals require that a vision be established; consequently; the sampling used for purposes of analysis was limited to the eight superintendents of the twelve who reported a stated vision currently in place.

In question #1, superintendents were asked to state what procedures they employed to present a commitment to the vision. Six superintendents reportedly demonstrated their persistent commitment by seizing every opportunity to restate their exact position on the vision to employees. All eight superintendents sent written messages describing activities that promoted the vision. Also, six superintendents sent frequent follow-up reminders and requested that the vision be displayed in every school. Three of these six superintendents had the vision printed on the district stationary.

Question #2 asked superintendents about their visibility and contact with employees. All eight superintendents responded with a YES to this question. They reported maintaining a schedule of visitations that provided adequate communication with the staff and allowed them to keep abreast of district happenings. All eight professed the belief that their actions were as important as what they said and that consistency over a period of time led to trust. They stated, furthermore, that frequent visits to the schools helped to promote the vision and convinced staff members of the superintendent's commitment to its goals. Six of the eight

superintendents preferred to conduct business directly at a school site in an effort to use the visibility to enhance trust.

In response to question #3, all eight superintendents promoted the sharing of information pertaining to expectations and progress of the vision with employees. These superintendents stated that such practices promoted a sense of motivation and team spirit among the staff members. They also reported that the open communication gained by sharing information reinforced the position of the superintendent on the vision. All eight superintendents believed that this process generated trust over time, with the by-product being a sense of employee belonging and commitment to the district vision.

Question #4 related to trusting employee input. All eight superintendents expressed strong support for gathering and considering employee input in their decision-making responsibilities. These superintendents viewed the receiving and utilizing of input as a source of teacher empowerment. The eight superintendents noted that for input generated from individual teachers, the credibility and reliability of the individual was considered before actions were undertaken.

In responding to question #5 concerning fulfilling promises and commitments, all eight superintendents answered with a YES, indicating that they viewed this as critical to maintaining their integrity. All eight noted that following through on promises and commitments fostered trust. Six of these eight superintendents added that they only commit themselves to promises that were within their ability to fulfill, through positional power, board action, or funding. In situations requiring the superintendent to say "no" when a commitment was requested, six of the eight superintendents stated that they would offer the individual an explanation as to why they were unable to do so.

Question #6 related to the generating of trust through expertise. In response to the question, all eight

superintendents answered in the affirmative. The eight superintendents expressed the belief that they must assume the responsibility for finding the resources needed to answer questions or to solve problems, as it was impossible to act as an expert in all matters. These superintendents indicated that they perceived themselves to be expedient facilitators in this process. As such, these superintendents believed that trust in their role as the district leader was generated. All eight superintendents also reported that self-confidence was necessary to establish a sense of trust with their staff.

In summary, the eight superintendents who had a stated vision, reported that written and verbal communication were essential components to establishing their position on the district vision. These eight superintendents indicated that frequent school visits were critical to promoting personal contact with employees. They also reported that consistent follow-through on commitments instilled trust in their abilities as superintendent. Problem-solving was viewed by all eight of the superintendents as an important function which promoted trust by demonstrating their expertise.

Twelve superintendents were interviewed and asked six questions each for a total of seventy-two (72) responses. As indicated in Table 5, forty-eight or sixty-six (66) percent of the responses were YES. The stratum percentages ranged from one hundred (100) percent with eighteen (18) YES responses of a possible eighteen (18) in Stratum A and Stratum C districts to a low of thirty-three (33) percent with six (6) YES responses of a possible eighteen (18) in high attendance, Stratum B and Stratum D.

The Use of Trust Through Positioning in The Superintendency As Perceived by the Principal

In the previous section, superintendents' perceptions of trust were presented. The data in Table 3 reveal the responses of the eight principals whose superintendents had

an established vision for the district. As in previous sections, the interviewing instrument and procedures employed were the same.

Four of the eight principals whose superintendents had an established vision responded with a YES to question #1 regarding commitment to the district vision. These four principals stated that they viewed their superintendent as being clear and consistent in regards to the vision. The clarity exhibited by the superintendents in these districts reportedly enabled the principals to support the vision and achieve stated goals at the school level. These principals believed that such clarity was the result of frequent communications, both verbal and written, with the superintendent on the nature and progress of the district vision. The four principals who responded with a NO, cited inconsistent and infrequent communications with the superintendent. These four stated that they were unsure as to the superintendent's support of and belief in the district vision due to the consistent lack of discourse on the subject.

Question #2 pertaining to the visibility and personal contact of superintendents with their staff was answered with a YES by all eight principals. Four reported that although visitations were infrequent or inconsistent and seldom addressed the vision goals, the presence of the superintendent at the schools was viewed as a positive means of increasing staff morale. The remaining four principals stated that their superintendents participated in staff development and other school-level activities. These four expressed the belief that this involvement by the superintendent added a sense of priority and importance to the activities that had been designed to further the established vision.

In response to question #3 on the sharing of information about expectations and progress with staff, six principals indicated that their superintendents did utilize this component to generate trust. These six respondents stated

that staff members had expressed a sense of being part of a team due to the superintendent's willingness to share pertinent information with them. The superintendent's efforts to include staff encouraged teachers to participate and co-operate with their principals. Two principals expressed the belief that their superintendent did not share information directly with staff but rather relied on committee reports that were reviewed by the principal. These two principals noted that they did not believe this detracted from an overall sense of trust in the superintendent, but did not enhance it.

Question #4 related to trusting input from employees. Four of the eight principals reported that while the superintendent did accept input from certain individuals, the teachers to whom the superintendents responded were not viewed as reliable sources of information by the principals, but were rather the more outspoken and popular teachers in the district. These principals added that they were then required to investigate the credibility of the information generated from these sources and report their findings to the superintendent. The remaining four principals indicated that their superintendent was selective in acquiring input from teachers. These principals stated that their superintendent would seek information concerning the reliability and credibility of the individuals providing the information prior to acting upon the input.

In response to question #5 related to following through on promises and commitments, six principals perceived this component to be the foundation of trust in the superintendent. These six interviewees reported that their superintendents backed statements of commitment with the financing, activities, and support necessary to fulfill the request. These principals also stated that the superintendent consistently provided an explanation for any request that was denied, which could then be relayed to the teacher or staff members involved in the issue. Two of the eight principal

respondents indicated that their superintendent did not consistently fulfill promises or that he/she altered the nature of the proposed action plan in such a manner as to significantly change the results that had been anticipated. These principals expressed a dissatisfaction with and lack of confidence in the superintendent as a result.

In responding to question #6, all eight principals reported that their superintendent generated an expertise in his/her position. The principals were in agreement concerning the admiration and respect they expressed for the superintendent for remaining current on contemporary issues in education. Recognition for their superintendent's successes in facing various situations was also reported by all eight principals.

In summary, four of the eight principals whose superintendent had an established vision, indicated that their superintendent projected a strong commitment to the vision through verbal and written communications. These four respondents stated that visibility, sharing of information with staff, and receiving input from individuals were key factors in generating trust throughout the district. The component of following through on commitments was determined by six of the eight principals to be an effective method of enhancing trust. All eight principals were unanimous in stating their belief that the superintendent generated a high level of expertise that resulted in a sense of confidence in his/her abilities in the position.

Twelve principals were interviewed and asked six questions each for a total of seventy-two (72) responses. As indicated in Table 3, forty (40) or fifty-five (55) percent of the responses were YES. The range of responses varied from a high of one hundred (100) percent with eighteen (18) responses of a possible eighteen (18) responses in Stratum A districts to a low of sixteen (16) percent with three (3) YES responses of a possible eighteen (18) responses in Stratum D districts.

Analysis of Data Regarding the Use of Trust Through Positioning As a Leadership Strategy As Perceived by Superintendents and Principals

Six questions were presented in the interview instrument related to the use of trust through positioning in the superintendency. The responses of both the superintendents and principals are presented in Table 3.

In accomplishing the district's goals as stated in the vision, the superintendent must possess the trust of his/her staff. The behaviors of the superintendent provide the basis upon which employees decide if his/her commitment to the district vision is hypocritical, shallow, or manipulative. Trust is established and maintained through consistency, credibility, strong interpersonal relationships, and a common commitment. An effective superintendent attends to conditions that lead to the establishing of a trusting relationship and regards trust as an essential leadership strategy.

All superintendents stated that they projected a strong and clear commitment to the district vision. Although they believed their interactions and behaviors were indicative of strong support to furthering the goals of the district vision, four principals reported a lack of clarity regarding the superintendent's use of the vision to establish goals and set forth standards for appropriate behaviors. The actions and expectations of the superintendent, which may be guided by the vision, must be explained to employees in such a manner as to demonstrate a clear linkage to the goals of the vision. The principals work directly with the teaching staff and are, therefore, most in need of an on-going system of communication for the superintendent to assure them and, subsequently, the district staff that his/her actions continue to be congruent with the established district vision. The importance of regular feedback to reinforce the superintendent's commitment is evident in the responses of

the four principals who felt their superintendents were truly committed to the district's vision. They cited as evidence frequent verbal and written communications directly related to the vision. The role of the vision in determining specific courses of action or changes proposed by the superintendent is critical to successfully producing the desired changes. A superintendent who is inconsistent or remiss in demonstrating the relationship between the behaviors he/she is requiring and the accomplishing of district goals, propagates a staff of skeptical and anxious employees. Although it is possible that the actions of all superintendents emanated from a true commitment to the vision, overlooking the need for frequent communication directly relating the requested staff behaviors to the vision goals resulted in a sense of confusion in the districts whose principals were not certain of the strength of their superintendent's commitment. Employees need to know how the superintendent's direction leads them towards specific goals. This is most often accomplished by the frequent articulating of the vision, as described by principals in districts led by superintendents viewed as strongly and clearly committed to the district goals.

Beyond verbal and written communication, personal contact and visibility are needed to instill trust. Although the necessity for employing adequate procedures for communicating the superintendent's commitment to the vision has been demonstrated, it is also critical that employees have sufficient opportunities to relate to their superintendent in a direct manner. All superintendents believed that they maintained a schedule that allowed for sufficient time to accomplish this. However, four principals expressed a sense of dissatisfaction regarding their superintendent's regularity of on-site visits, which they felt provided the most important setting for promoting personal contact. These principals reported that the visits made by the superintendent were positive in nature and helpful in maintaining high employee morale; however, it was

apparent that they desired more frequent visitations. The principals whose superintendents pursued a more regular schedule of interactions with the district staff supported the perception that such visibility promoted a positive sense of the superintendent's commitment to the vision. They expressed an increase in staff enthusiasm towards their work when the superintendent communicated directly with them. It is the sense of personal commitment resulting from the frequent visits that promotes greater trust in the superintendent as the district leader. The superintendent also profits from the direct contact by gathering first-hand information about the needs in the district. With such information, he/she is better able to make the necessary adjustments in the methods prescribed to meet the goals. This process results in more appropriate activities and expectations, which, in turn, increases the employees' trust in the superintendent as someone who understands and responds to their working conditions.

The process of establishing trust also requires that the superintendent relay information on the status and progress of the district in meeting stated goals. All superintendents recognized the importance of sharing information with staff regarding the progress of district goals. They were adamant in their belief that they employed means of disseminating such information. In all but two districts, principals agreed that their superintendent was an effective communicator in this area. These two principals felt that their superintendents were remiss in adequately informing employees of progress in meeting district goals. In these two districts, the superintendents provided information on the progress of the goals through written reports which the principals presented at building meetings. The principals felt this means of sharing information was inadequate but did not believe it detracted from the trust that the superintendent had previously established with the staff. In contrast to other components of trust, such as promoting the

vision or maintaining personal contact, sharing information may be more easily accomplished by the superintendent. Disseminating information on district progress allows for the more objective reporting of facts, which is often an easier task than defining the relationship between the superintendent's expectations or behaviors and the goals set forth by the vision. While two superintendents were criticized for the method of transmitting such information, all superintendents provided some form of feedback on the progress of the vision, therefore indicating that this component can be utilized on at least a minimal basis. Trust is gained through the employment of the components identified in this leadership strategy. The lack of direct feedback on the progress of district goals may not provide the staff with the type of interaction most associated with a close, trusting relationship; however, where trust has been previously established, a more formalized, indirect method of sharing information is acceptable. For maximizing trust, direct face-to-face communication is a more suitable alternative that further enhances the perceived strength of the superintendent's commitment to the vision and provides the necessary personal contact with employees.

Employees grant a higher level of trust to the superintendent when their input is viewed as valuable and is considered in the decision-making process. Such input was regarded as vital information by all eight superintendents, who expressed a willingness to listen to employees. Superintendents perceived themselves as maintaining an openness to input from district staff which they then examined and considered for validity and reliability. Although the principals agreed that the superintendent employed this system for generating staff input, four principals questioned the ability of their superintendent to discern the difference between the input generated from popular and more vocal teachers who may not present the information accurately and that of less articulate or more

reluctant teachers whose opinions may prove to be more valuable. The issue of employee input appears to be one of trust by the principal in the superintendent's judgement and his/her methods of ascertaining the credibility of the information. In the other four districts, the principals applauded their superintendent's effective use of employee input by expressing confidence in his/her ability to judge the validity of the feedback received. It would seem likely that the past experiences of the principals, whether positive or negative, impacted significantly on their perceptions of the superintendent's effectiveness in this component. Without a more formal, established method for determining the validity and reliability of the feedback, the superintendents whose judgements have been perceived as accurate in the past could lose their status in the future through a less than vigorous scrutiny of the individuals and the input they have provided.

The need to maintain a sense of integrity was reported by all eight superintendents as the reason for following through on proferred commitments or promises. Each stressed the importance of knowing restraining or prohibitive factors and, consequently, extending only those offers that could be fulfilled. With the exception of two, the principals concurred with their superintendents that they were conscientious and reliable in satisfying the promises they had extended. These superintendents enhanced their image further by providing explanations for negative responses to requests by district employees. Trust is established and maintained through consistency. Superintendents who consistently meet the commitments they have made, and who can be relied upon for an explanation when denying a request strengthen the interpersonal relationship between themselves and their staff. For the two principals who did not agree that their superintendent followed through on commitments, a serious breach of trust had developed due to specific incidents in which the superintendents altered the nature of

agreements that had been previously established. The changes were enacted without the involvement of the original participants, which led to further disenchantment with the superintendent and a subsequent lack of trust. So critical is the fulfillment of commitments that failure to produce as promised seriously undermines the trust that had been previously established. Other components, such as trusting input from employees, allowed superintendents a wider variance in behaviors considered acceptable as perceived by the principals. Trusting the superintendent to stand behind the promises he/she has set forth is expected without exception. The impact of failing to do so is immediate and not readily forgotten.

The responses of both the superintendents and principals to the interview questions on the component involving generating expertise suggest that all superintendents were successful in projecting an image of capability and wisdom. The superintendents viewed themselves as the district's educational leader, a role which they assumed with respect and deep-seated commitment. A strong sense of self-confidence, when transmitted by superintendents, provides a reassurance to employees that someone is there to maintain an equilibrium in the district. Staff members are able to perform their roles in the district, confident that problems, unexpected situations, and needed changes are being handled by the superintendent appropriately, and with the district's best interests in mind. The superintendents, while noting that they were capable of leading the district, were clear in expressing that they did not always have a spontaneous answer to questions or problems as they arose. However, they were particularly effective in seeking the resources or expertise needed to ultimately produce a solution. This was observed by the principals, who perceived the superintendents as having the wisdom to recognize the need for assistance and the knowledge to locate the most appropriate source of help. Trust is not based upon the employee's perception of the

superintendent as an omnipotent leader. It emanates from the perception of the superintendent as a leader whose background and resourcefulness can be relied upon to sustain the district in its efforts to realize the established vision.

The results of this study, as presented and analyzed in this chapter, demonstrated that trust is a strategy employed by effective leaders. As noted by Nancy Paulu in her study of sixteen superintendents, trust in the superintendent was built from the first day they assumed their position. They strove to generate trust by developing strong relationships with their staffs and communities.[7] The superintendents who were perceived as effective leaders of their district realized the importance of establishing trust as a means of achieving stated goals. They proceeded by projecting a strong and clear commitment to the district vision, which they accomplished through frequent verbal and written communications with the staff. Building trust requires a sensitivity to the needs and interests of the employees. The leader must practice openness in actions and intentions, thereby preventing surprises and reducing the threat of the unknown[8]. The successful superintendents maintained a regular schedule of visits to the schools, readily shared information on the progress of district goals, and sought input from employees. They also were noted for maintaining a sense of integrity, which Buck Rodgers of IBM believed to be essential to trust. He cautioned leaders to honor any commitments they make. People must know what to expect of their leader.[9] The superintendents voiced strong support of following through on commitments and professed a belief in only extending promises that were within the realm of their authority or ability to

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[7]Nancy Paulu, "Key Player in School Reform:The Superintendent", The School Administrator 46 (March, 1989):9.
[8]James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, The Leadership Challenge, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989), 151.
[9]Buck Rodgers, The IBM Way (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1986), 33.

fulfill. Effective leaders must be able to build trust in their ability to transform the ideals of the vision into reality.[10] Effective superintendents, as indicated in this study, actively and consciously pursued the establishment of trust as an important leadership strategy.

The Use of Deployment of Self As a Leadership Strategy

The fourth leadership strategy in this study is deployment of self in the superintendency. Self-deployment begins with the knowledge of one's strengths and weaknesses. However, self-deployment ventures beyond a self-awareness of one's capabilities into capitalizing upon strengths while minimizing weaknesses for the advancement of the organization. Five interview questions were posed for the section on self-deployment. Questioning techniques remained the same as in the three previous leadership strategies studied. The five questions related to the use of self-deployment were as follows:

1) developing provisions to improve personal skills required to pursue the district vision
2) emphasizing personal strengths to further accomplishments of the district
3) compensating for areas of weakness
4) delegating for effective use of employees
5) providing opportunities for creating, developing, and nurturing future leaders

Table 4 indicates the number of superintendents and principals in each stratum and the total number of superintendents and principals responding with a YES to each question.

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[10]Conger, Charismatic Leader, 96.

The Use of Deployment of Self in the Superintendency As Perceived by the Superintendent

Self-deployment as a means of furthering district goals requires an established vision. Consequently, the sampling used for purposes of analysis was limited to the eight superintendents of the twelve interviewed who reported that their district had a stated vision.

All eight superintendents responded with a YES to the question related to developing personal skills. These eight superintendents indicated that they relied upon a system of networking with other superintendents as the primary means of remaining current on important educational issues. A secondary source of information leading to improvement of personal skills, according to the eight superintendents, was membership in professional organizations that provided conferences and workshops on pertinent topics. Six superintendents reported that they were prolific readers of educational journals and books, which they believed contributed to the knowledge base necessary for successful administration of their duties. Four of the eight superintendents named the administrative academies established by the state to advance the skills of administrators as sources of professional growth. Two superintendents improved skills in areas such as computer literacy and persuasive public speaking by attending workshops presented by the private business sector.

Question #2 concerning emphasizing strengths was responded to with a YES by all eight of the superintendents. The eight superintendents indicated that a frequently used strength was their oral communication skills which they used to motivate individuals to achieve. These interviewees expressed the belief that this particular personal skill heightened the effectiveness of the district in meeting stated goals. They maintained that this strength enabled them to convince an individual to accomplish any assigned task.

Five of the superintendents cited their ability to organize and project district needs for the next five years as a primary strength. Two of these superintendents also stated that their exceptional writing abilities enabled them to be clear and concise. The two superintendents who reported attending workshops to improve their computer skills indicated that these skills were valuable in assisting the district

Table 4

Yes Responses by Superintendents and Principals Regarding the Use of Deployment of Self as a Leadership Strategy in the Superintendency

S = Superintendent P = Principal N = 12

Components of Self-Deployment	Number of YES Responses									
	Stratum (H-H) A		Stratum (H-L) B		Stratum (L-H) C		Stratum (L-L) D		Total	
	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P
1. Develop personal skills	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
2. Emphasize strengths	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
3. Compensate for weaknesses	3	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	5	3
4. Delegate	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
5. Provide for future leaders	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	8	8
Total of YES Responses	15	15	4	4	14	12	4	4	37	35
Total of Possible YES Responses	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	60	60
Percentage of YES Responses	100	100	26	26	93	80	26	26	61	58

towards completing organizational plans, such as projecting educational costs for a five year span of time.

Question #3 related to the compensating for perceived weaknesses. Three of the eight superintendents reported that they did not have weaknesses in need of compensation. Of the remaining five, two identified a weakness in the area of computer technology. These respondents believed that they had not adequately provided for an update computer set-up that could accommodate the needs of central office personnel. They also stated that all district administrators were in need of improvement in their computer skills, for which these superintendents felt a responsibility to provide. Of the five superintendents reporting weaknesses, one identified a problem with confronting personnel problems before situations became critical. In an effort to address the problem, this superintendent was attending a series of administrative workshops pertaining to this topic. The remaining two superintendents of those reporting weaknesses cited difficulties in specific areas of their jobs. One of these respondents identified a weakness in finance. The other superintendent perceived a problem with legal matters. Both individuals reported that they compensate for these weaknesses by consulting with those on the administrative staff with expertise in these areas.

In answering question #4, all superintendents reportedly used delegation for the good of the district. They stated that they possessed the ability to match the right individual with the task to be completed. Two superintendents indicated that having a large number of administrators and teachers in their district provided an adequate source of individuals to whom tasks could be delegated. Superintendents in smaller districts used delegation to ease administrators' burdens by assigning capable teachers with such tasks as grant writing. These individuals were then rewarded with compensatory time. All eight superintendents agreed that the process of delegation was not meant to dismiss the responsibilities of

the superintendent; consequently, frequent monitoring and progress checks on the individuals with delegated duties was viewed as imperative.

A YES response was received from all superintendents to question #5 on nurturing and developing future leaders. Two superintendents stated that while they had not viewed this as a process, they had established an in-district master's degree program in conjunction with a local university to encourage potential administrators. They also reported that teachers who demonstrate leadership qualities were afforded the opportunity to act as committee chairpersons or project developers. Three of the eight superintendents created interim administrative positions for individuals who exhibited talents in specific areas. All eight of the superintendents reported a sense of personal satisfaction when an individual whom they had nurtured assumed a leadership position, either within the district or in a new district.

In summary, all eight superintendents with a stated vision, regarded memberships in professional organizations and networking among colleagues as significant means of improving personal skills. Of these eight superintendents identifying weaknesses, most indicated that they utilize the expertise of their administrative staff to assist them. These superintendents viewed delegation as an important means of accomplishing tasks by assigning responsibilities to capable individuals. Interviewees also indicated that delegation led to the nurturing of future educational leaders.

Twelve superintendents were interviewed and asked five questions each for a total of sixty (60) responses. As indicated in Table 4, thirty-seven (37) or sixty-one (61) percent of the responses were YES. The stratum percentages ranged from a one hundred (100) percent with fifteen (15) yes responses of a possible fifteen (15) responses in Stratum A to a low percentage of twenty-six (26) percent with four (4) YES responses of a possible fifteen (15) responses in both Stratum B and Stratum D.

The Use of Deployment of Self in the Superintendency As Perceived by the Principal

The previous section presented data on superintendents' perceptions of self-deployment as a leadership strategy. In this section, data on principals' responses to questions on their superintendent's use of the strategy of self-deployment are presented, for those whose superintendents had a stated vision. The same interview instrument and method of analysis were employed. Results are presented in Table 8.

All eight of the principals whose superintendent had an established vision responded with a YES to question #1 related to the superintendent's improving personal skills to benefit the district. These eight all reported an awareness of the superintendent's professional growth activities, such as participation in courses and workshops offered by the educational service regions established by the State of Illinois. Four of the principals from high wealth districts reportedly were given opportunities to dialogue with their superintendent on new techniques or philosophies that he/she had learned through networking with other superintendents or through specialized workshops. All six principals from high wealth districts stated that their superintendent shared new information obtained through journal readings and books with them.

Question #2 related to the superintendent's emphasis on his/her strengths. All eight of the principals indicated that their superintendent was a particularly persuasive public speaker who capitalized upon this talent by frequently presenting district information or needs before an audience, rather than in written form. Four principals stated that their superintendent's organizational skills were evident in the long range plans to achieve district goals that were developed by the superintendent and shared with administrators. Two of these individuals also indicated that

the superintendent's strong writing abilities were displayed through the clear and concisely worded communiques on the progress of achieving the vision that were sent from his/her office on a regular basis. Three of the eight principals expressed the belief that their superintendent, while emphasizing verbal communication skills, did not fully utilize their writing abilities to keep the administrative staff informed about the progress on district goals.

In response to question #3 concerning compensating for areas of weakness, three of the eight principals reported that their superintendents had identified weaknesses with plans to address them which they acknowledged to the administrative staff. Two of these principals cited examples of the superintendent's concerns for areas that were not working effectively, such as the computer program or in staff relationships. In both situations, the superintendents shared plans with the administrative staff for securing the assistance needed to correct the problems. The other five principals were unable to identify areas of weakness in their superintendent; consequently they answered NO to question #3.

All eight of the principals answered YES to question #4 regarding the use of delegation by their superintendent. These eight respondents also added that when the superintendent delegated a task to a district administrator, he/she chose the individual. When the scope of a task reached beyond the administrative ranks, the superintendent sought the principal's advice and input prior to delegating a responsibility to an individual. Two principals reported that staff members received monetary compensation. Teachers in two other districts were given an interim title by the superintendent and compensated with time for their efforts.

All eight principals reported that their superintendent provided opportunities to develop and nurture future leaders. Of these, five principals indicated that the initial effort had to emanate from the individual. The superintendent was then able to recognize those individuals who had contributed

significantly to the success of the vision and provide encouragement for further professional development. Five of the eight principals stated that teachers who displayed leadership skills were assigned additional duties. This exposure provided opportunities for the superintendent to recognize the individual and slate him/her for new openings as they became available. All eight principals believed that their superintendent sincerely promoted individuals with potential.

In summary, all eight principals whose superintendents had an established vision, recognized their superintendents' efforts towards improvement of personal skills, most notably through workshops, conferences, and networking with other superintendents. An identified strength cited by all eight principals was that of persuasive speaking abilities. The majority of the eight principals were unable to identify specific weaknesses in their superintendent. Those whose superintendent had a recognized area of weakness reported that the superintendent had shared with them a plan of action for improving the situation. All eight principals stated that delegation was employed by the superintendent to increase district efficiency. These principals also noted that ample opportunities were provided by the superintendent for the nurturing of individuals with leadership potential.

Twelve principals were interviewed and asked five questions each for a total of sixty (60) responses. As indicated in Table 8, thirty-five (35) or fifty-eight (58) percent of the responses were YES. The stratum percentages ranged from a high of one hundred (100) percent with fifteen (15) YES responses of a possible fifteen (15) responses in Stratum A to a low percentage of twenty-six (26) with four (4) YES responses of a possible fifteen (15) responses in both Stratum B and Stratum D.

Analysis of Data Regarding the Use of Deployment of Self As a Leadership Strategy As Perceived by Superintendents and Principals

Five questions were presented in the interview instrument related to the use of deployment of self in the superintendency. The responses of both superintendents and principals are presented in Table 4.

An effective leader must possess a self-awareness of the personal skills he/she brings to the superintendency. The needs of the district as related to the stated vision must be considered as the superintendent assesses personal strengths and weaknesses and proceeds with a self-development plan. The effective superintendent is able to perceive the coordination between strengths and weaknesses in relation to the district vision and recognizes that strong leadership is a matter of self-development.

All superintendents recognized the necessity for developing their personal skills. A variety of methods for accomplishing this were mentioned, including participation in workshops, journal readings, and networking with other superintendents. The principals agreed that their superintendent actively pursued a plan of self-development and were able to identify the activities in which the superintendent engaged. Both superintendents and principals believed the best resources for developing skills needed in the superintendency were conferences held by professional organizations and networking with fellow superintendents. Furthermore, the principals were able to articulate how these activities contributed to the superintendent's effectiveness. The similarity in responses indicates that superintendents had considered their self-improvement plan to be an important facet of their role as superintendent and were, therefore, willing to share details with their staff. In the process of acquiring new skills, the superintendent reinforces not only

his commitment to the needs of the district but his/her determination to meet those needs through self-improvement. By acknowledging to the staff that areas of weakness exist that can be strengthened through concerted effort, the superintendent provides a model for all employees. The six principals who praised their superintendent for also sharing the newly acquired knowledge with them had received a clear message that effective superintendents are confident that the pursuit of self-improvement is a positive process for achieving district goals. The self-confidence exuded by these leaders allows them to willingly identify areas in which they need more information or skills and to enlist the support of their subordinates by revealing the courses of action to be taken, as well as, the outcomes.

The superintendent's strengths are among the most valuable assets that a district possesses. In accomplishing the goals set forth by the district vision, the superintendent must identify his/her strengths and capitalize upon them. All superintendents believed their greatest strength was their ability to motivate and persuade employees towards accomplishing district goals. The principals had noted that their superintendent was a particularly persuasive public speaker and frequently used speaking occasions to direct attention and efforts towards meeting district goals. The influence generated by an articulate public speaker was identified by both superintendents and principals alike as a key strength, indicating that the superintendents had emphasized this skill by seeking opportunities to address audiences. The principals' awareness of their superintendent's areas of strength is further indicated in the close similarities of responses between the two superintendents and their principals who cited an additional strength in the superintendent's writing ability. These superintendents reported that they were able to write concisely and persuasively and, therefore, frequently communicated to the staff and community in written briefs or

newsletters. A skill that is not as easily observed as public speaking or persuasive writing is the ability to organize by projecting district needs over a period of several years. However, five principals were able to identify and acknowledge their superintendent's organizational abilities as evidenced by the long range planning for achievement of district goals which had been shared with the principals. The five superintendents had also cited this area as one in which they excelled. It is apparent that staff members are able to recognize and appreciate the specific strengths of superintendents who identify their areas of strength and apply their skills in the pursuit of district goals. Superintendents who receive such feedback from their subordinates are assured that they are effectively emphasizing their skills.

In contrast to the principals' ability to recognize their superintendent's strengths, they were only able to identify the weaknesses their superintendent had chosen to make known to them. The weaknesses which two superintendents were willing to share with their principals involved a lack of adequate computer literacy skills. They were openly self-critical of their limited skills in this area and enlisted the help of their administrative staff to assist them in improving their abilities. Two superintendents with problems in the areas of finance and school law had consulted with experts in these fields and did not discuss these deficiencies with their principals. The principals were apparently unaware of the problems. In identifying areas of weakness, superintendents appear to distinguish between those skills that would be considered less critical to performing effectively as a superintendent, such as computer literacy, and skills that may be perceived as more serious shortcomings, such as handling school finance issues. They are thus able to maintain the over-all confidence of their employees while proceeding with self-improvement plans on a more private level. The five superintendents who reported

having no weaknesses were supported in this belief by their principals. An effective leader is able to evaluate and identify areas of weakness. While these principals did not note areas of concern in their superintendent's abilities, it is possible that the superintendents were unwilling to divulge their limitations or were unable to self-evaluate adequately. However, weaknesses that would seriously affect the superintendent's ability to perform his/her duties could not be easily concealed. One superintendent divulged that he had a self-identified weakness in the area of personnel issues. It was his belief that he often ignored brewing personnel problems, thus allowing minor incidents to escalate into serious situations. However, his principal noted no such weakness in his superintendent's ability to manage personnel, which would presumably be easily observed. The superintendent had chosen not to reveal this weakness to his staff. After observing that several of his administrators also were weak in this area, he scheduled a series of workshops on this topic for them. By participating in the seminars he was able to learn methods of compensating for his weakness without overtly informing his staff. Consequently, whether a superintendent chooses not to publicize a problem area or does not recognize that one exists, he/she is compensating in some manner if the weakness is not readily noticed by subordinates.

The component of delegation was employed by all superintendents. They endorsed the maintaining of a prescribed level of involvement with those individuals to whom they had delegated a task or responsibility. Ascertaining the degree of involvement necessary for each individual is a skill possessed by effective leaders. The level of supervision determined by the superintendent should reflect the appropriateness of the delegation itself. Over-involvement leads to decreased productivity on the part of the person assuming the responsibility. This situation often arises when the task is within the realm of the superintendent's

abilities. Principals agreed that their superintendent was able to effectively identify both appropriate tasks and individuals. In districts without the financial resources to employ department or program specialists, the superintendent had to delegate responsibilities. He/she had neither the time nor the diverse background of knowledge to effectively manage these areas of the educational program. In such cases, the tendency to become over-involved with the individual to whom the work was delegated would be reduced as the superintendent was truly unable to perform these duties. Delegating in districts with adequate personnel to handle specialized areas requires a careful self-assessment by the superintendent. Delegating is an effective method of improving areas of weakness. A successful superintendent will choose a task which is outside his/her range of abilities and learn from the individual to whom the task was assigned. This also requires that the person selected for delegation be highly qualified and competent. The principals strongly supported their superintendent's procedures for securing such individuals. In most situations, the superintendent analyzed information submitted to him/her about the staff member being considered. The sources of information were varied and appropriate. Through the careful and deliberate selection of both the task and the person, the superintendents were able to effectively employ delegation to meet the needs of the district.

The importance of developing future leadership within the district was recognized by all superintendents, who credited themselves with having established district procedures to fulfill this need. The principals were in agreement that their superintendent assumed the responsibility for seeking out employees with leadership potential and for providing opportunities to develop their skills. The process of creating future leaders within an organization requires a system for identifying, developing, and nurturing those individuals who are capable of assuming

positions of authority. The superintendents instituted plans for providing specific opportunities for teachers to advance themselves, such as on-site Master's Degree programs in administration. Superintendents in both low and high attendance districts were able to offer teachers a variety of quasi-administrative experiences. The devising and arranging for these opportunities was recognized as the superintendents' responsibility. However, the process of identifying individuals to assume positions of authority, such as committee chairmanships, was undertaken by both superintendents and principals. The principals reported that their superintendents sought detailed information regarding an individual's expertise prior to appointing him/her to a position of responsibility. That information was generally obtained from the principal, who thus became the primary identifier of teachers with potential. The superintendent's involvement in the identification process was in choosing from among the candidates who had been recommended by their principal. While both superintendents and principals believed the superintendent does the nurturing of potential leaders, the teacher's direct contact with him/her was limited. For those individuals who were charged with heading committees or special projects, the involvement with the superintendent consisted mainly of reporting progress and outcomes. The encouragement provided was most often in the form of public recognition, compensatory time, financial renumeration, or congratulatory letters. While perhaps motivating for these teachers, such reinforcers could not be considered as "nurturing" interactions. The teachers who became involved in Master's Degree programs in administration had little or no direct contact with the superintendent; consequently, a nurturing relationship would be impossible to establish. It is likely that the person who delivers most of the nurturing for potential leaders is the principal. As the immediate supervisor, the principal has frequent opportunities to communicate and encourage teachers with leadership potential.

All respondents, however, strongly indicated that the superintendent was the person responsible for creating future leaders. The realization that without the opportunities provided by the superintendent, no system for leadership development would exist, leads to the perception of the superintendent as the primary cultivator of future leaders. In actuality, potential leaders are created through the combined efforts of a superintendent who ensures that opportunities for advancement exist and principals who support and encourage those individuals with the motivation and skills to assume future positions of authority.

Successful leadership is closely linked to self-accountability. This involves the recognition that the responsibility assumed in the position requires personal growth. Through accountability, or self-deployment, the leader's own resources are mobilized and new skills are acquired as needed.[11] The data presented and analyzed in this study support the use of self-deployment as a leadership strategy. The superintendents were able to identify their areas of strengths and weaknesses. They capitalized upon their strongest skills, which for most superintendents was their public speaking ability and used it to move stakeholders towards accomplishment of the district vision. As noted by Charles Garfield, the successful leader accurately assesses personal strengths and understands how these particular skills mesh with the demands of the organization. They also are aware of areas of weakness, and utilize delegation to assist them in achieving goals.[12] The effective superintendents in the study attended to areas of weakness by self-improvement activities. They enlisted the assistance of experts, either in-district or outside consultants. Delegation of tasks and responsibilities was

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[11]Peter F. Drucker, Managing the Nonprofit Organization, (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 1990), 192.
[12]Charles Garfield, Peak Performers (New York: Avon Books, 1987), 184.

viewed as a positive means of accomplishing goals which they could not achieve alone. Lee Iacocca expressed the belief that tasks that are not within the realm of the leader's area of expertise should be delegated. The successful leader then learns from the person to whom the duty was delegated.[13] The effective superintendents in this study were able to demonstrate an understanding of the components involved in self-deployment and had made a strong commitment to the continued pursuit of a personalized plan of growth and development.

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[13]Lee Iacocca, Talking Straight (New York: Bantam Books, 1988), 78.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The focus of this study was to analyze superintendents' use of the leadership strategies of vision, communication of culture, trust, and self-deployment. The population of the school districts chosen for the study consisted of elementary public school districts located in the Illinois counties of Cook and DuPage. The one hundred forty-eight elementary public school districts in these two counties were ranked according to size and wealth. The 1988-89 Average Daily Attendance (ADA) was used as the measure of school district size. A Local Wealth Index (LWI) was computed for each district by multiplying the assessed valuation per pupil by the tax rate. The Local Wealth Index was then used to measure the wealth of the individual school districts. The median of both measures was utilized to create four strata: 1) high attendance/high wealth, 2) high attendance/low wealth, 3) low attendance/high wealth, and 4) low attendance/low wealth. Three districts within each stratum were chosen randomly to identify the twelve superintendents who would participate in the study. The main purpose in creating the strata was to facilitate the selection of a representative sample of elementary school districts with the population to be studied.

Upon selecting the twelve districts to be included in the study, each superintendent was contacted by telephone to affirm willingness to participate, to establish times and dates, and to request that the superintendent select a principal to participate in the interviewing process. A letter of confirmation was then forwarded to the superintendents. The letter also included a copy of the

interview instrument and a statement of intent to use a tape recording device. The instrument used for interviewing was identical for both the superintendents and principals. Structured questions were used in the design of the interviewing instrument to elicit open-ended responses. The questions were divided into groups according to the four leadership strategies of vision, communication of culture, trust, and self-deployment.

Probing by the interviewer was used if the respondent (superintendent or principal) indicated the superintendent's use of any of the components of the leadership strategies. If further explanations indicated a definite use of a component, a YES response was recorded. A NO was recorded when the interviewee reported no use of the component or if probing indicated the component was not utilized. Recording responses in this manner yielded a quantifiable measure of the use of the four leadership strategies, as perceived by the superintendents and principals.

The interview technique used in the data gathering provided insights into the respondents' attitudes, motives, feelings, and beliefs. It also enabled the interviewer to explore initial responses, examine unexpected answers, and re-direct inquiries into more fruitful channels. This allowed each subject latitude in responding personally to justify or explain his/her position on each component. The responses were analyzed to determine the superintendents' use of the four leadership strategies. Based upon the responses to the interview questions, conclusions were drawn and implications for leadership in the superintendency were determined.

Conclusions

The study led to the development of conclusions based upon the purposes of the study as established in Chapter I.

1. All superintendents either had an established district vision in place or were in the process of developing a vision.

Of the twelve superintendents studied, the majority had a stated district vision. The remaining superintendents were well underway in the development of a vision. The vision, as the basis for defining what the school district is about, what it represents, and the goals towards which it is striving, was viewed as an essential component in strategic leadership. The four superintendents who were in the process of developing the vision and the two who had a vision in place, reflected the most current beliefs regarding the importance of involving representatives from all district stakeholders. The five superintendents who had previously established their vision with input limited to the board of education, and, as in one case, to the superintendent himself, were adamant that their vision was effective and met their district's needs. While the process of creating a vision varied somewhat, with over half of the superintendents utilizing the input of stakeholders and the remainder having developed the vision either in isolation or in conjunction with the board of education, all superintendents were strong believers in the need for a district vision.

2. The superintendents who had a stated district vision were able to provide direction and focus if they emphasized a system of on-going monitoring and communication.

All twelve superintendents expressed a strong commitment towards a district vision, whether it had been previously established or was in the process of development. However, accomplishing the vision goals required the superintendent to formulate and implement various strategies for focusing staff towards meeting these goals.

A key factor in promoting the vision was the superintendent's perceived passion about the vision. The

principals who viewed their superintendent as persuasive and convincing about the need to meet vision goals reported that the vision came "alive" in their district. The superintendents from these districts were adept at promoting the vision frequently and with an eagerness that sent a message to the staff that the vision was an endeavor worth pursuing. By articulating the vision wherever and whenever possible, a sense of team spirit ensued in the district.

Other strategies employed by superintendents who were successful in promoting the vision included close monitoring of progress towards meeting the goals. These superintendents sought feedback from several sources, such as principals, teachers, non-certified staff, and community members. An important factor in gathering such input was the superintendent's desire to maintain close contact with stakeholders. They joined district committees, regularly surveyed all faculty members, and actively participated in staff development programs.

The significance of the behaviors of superintendents who had an established system for communicating and monitoring the district vision was exemplified in the contrasts between these superintendents and those who lacked such a system. In half of the districts with a stated vision, principals were unable to describe their superintendent as impassioned about it. The superintendent failed to utilize opportunities for communicating the vision. In general, the superintendent's visibility in the district was minimal. The principals in these districts were unable to articulate the vision and were unsure about progress being made towards the goals. In the lower wealth districts where funding issues were of a concern, the principals were also unable to accurately state the vision, but were able to cite the limitations imposed upon them by the lack of adequate monies in a manner highly similar to their superintendent. The focus had moved away from a view of the vision as a basis for unifying the staff and community towards a common mission. Rather, the

superintendent developed the vision and proceeded to cast it aside as unreachable, and, therefore, not worth addressing. Without a belief in the unifying spirit that a vision can bring about in a district, the superintendent was apt to lose interest in establishing a system of regular communication and monitoring that would lead to accomplishment of the vision goals. The resulting lack of frequent communication with the superintendent created a situation in which attainment of the vision goals, which were not clearly stated or emphasized, became difficult to achieve. The superintendent, consequently, lost the personal motivation to provide the necessary extensive promotion and monitoring of the vision, which then created a cycle of failure in the attainment of the district vision.

3. Superintendents led their districts towards attainment of the vision by creating a strong and functional culture.

The superintendents employed components of culture that guided the district towards the vision goals. Perpetuating the culture through employment practices was a widely used component by the superintendents. In all districts, the teacher candidates were selected based upon their perceived potential to support the district vision. Although the principals in most districts assumed the responsibility for interviewing and recommending specific individuals, their actions were directed by the superintendent. Staff development programs and on-site teacher training activities were also part of the process that superintendents employed to ensure the development of a culture that perpetuated the vision. The superintendents recognized that staff needed to learn the behaviors that supported the desired culture. In four of the districts, the superintendents extended the learning process by requiring principals to institute a mentoring program for new staff to further ensure that they would assimilate the culture.

Promoting change, as a component of communication of culture, was perceived somewhat differently between superintendents and their principals. While all superintendents had established procedures for implementing change, there was disagreement regarding the sources upon which the superintendents relied. The perception of the principals was that much of the superintendent's actions were based upon interactions with staff members, who may or may not be credible sources of information. As principals, they believed the superintendent should seek their input about the information received from teachers. Although the superintendents did not state that teacher input provided the sole basis for initiating change, the perception of the principals indicated that promoting change, as a component of culture was not used as effectively towards attainment of the district vision.

In a related area, reactions of both superintendents and principals were once again somewhat incongruous. All superintendents believed that fostering change as a means of maintaining district culture was a responsibility they assumed. Principals also recognized the importance of fostering change as a means of creating a culture that supported the vision goals. However, the principals were equally divided over their superintendent's role in this process. In four districts, the superintendents maintained a regular schedule of school visitations, participated in staff development activities with the staff, and were viewed as highly visible. They were perceived as having the necessary information to determine what changes were required to meet the district vision. In contrast, the ability of the remaining superintendents, who had not maintained a close contact with the schools, to determine the need for and initiate changes were questioned by the principals. Consequently, fostering change was viewed by both groups as necessary for perpetuating the district culture. The key factor in the superintendent's successful use of the

component was close communication with the schools and the resulting assurance that he/she was able to make decisions regarding changes that were based upon accurate input.

4. Superintendents were able to move their staff towards attainment of the district vision by establishing trust.

While all superintendents had developed a basic level of trust, there were variations in their use of the components necessary to maintain the image of a leader who is consistent, credible, and committed to the district vision. Most of the superintendents, with the exception of two, had demonstrated a sense of integrity reflected in their consistent follow-through on proffered promises. These superintendents were careful and deliberate in making commitments by understanding the importance of identifying those requests that were in their power and ability to fulfill. They also were consistent in explaining the basis for denying requests. The importance of establishing trust by maintaining a sense of integrity was clearly demonstrated by the reactions of the two principals who reported that their superintendent was not one to be trusted to honor commitments. Following experiences in which their superintendent had changed the nature of an agreement without informing them, these principals were wary and disenchanted. They were reluctant to fully participate with the superintendent in working towards the vision, as this basic yet vital component of trust was lacking.

In linking expectations and required behaviors to the goals of the vision, four superintendents were noted for frequent verbal and written communications that specifically addressed this issue. Their principals reported that such information served to clarify and redirect administrative and teaching staff towards fulfillment of the goals. These superintendents were viewed as successful in demonstrating that certain behaviors would lead to meeting stated goals.

The superintendents who directed without clearly explaining the relationship between the expectations he/she set forth and the accomplishment of the goals were perceived as less committed to the vision. Principals also reported that such a lack of clear communication resulted in a perception of the superintendent as inconsistent, thus creating a staff of skeptical and anxious individuals.

In addition to defining the relationship between expectations and fulfillment of the vision, superintendents who had established a strong sense of trust were reported to be highly visible. In this component, once again half of the superintendents visited the schools on a regular basis, which resulted in an increase in staff enthusiasm and willingness to continue pursuit of the district vision. These superintendents used the visits to promote a positive and optimistic atmosphere in the district. They also were able to assimilate information regarding district needs, which they used to implement changes and make adjustments. The process led to a higher level of trust, as the superintendent possessed the feedback necessary to make informed decisions, which further enhanced his/her standing with the staff.

5. Superintendents led their district towards fulfillment of the vision by maximizing their strengths and compensating for their weaknesses.

Self-development was considered to be an essential, on-going function for a district leader, according to all superintendents. That they were particularly straight-forward in their acknowledgment of the need for improvement was evidenced by the fact that all principals reported an awareness of the specific activities in which their superintendent was participating in this area. Furthermore, the superintendents were able to demonstrate to the principals how their self-development plan contributed to his/her effectiveness in accomplishing the goals of the district. In six of the districts, the superintendents were

also willing to share with the principals the outcomes of the various endeavors they had undertaken to acquire new skills.

A particular strength that was identified by both superintendents and their principals was the ability to communicate persuasively, particularly in public speaking situations. All superintendents cited this as a key strength they utilized to move the community, staff, and other stakeholders towards accomplishment of the vision. Their perception was vigorously reinforced by the principals, who expressed a strong admiration for their superintendent's persuasive communication skills, including speaking and writing. The superintendents' efforts to capitalize upon identified strengths, such as their public speaking ability, was also revealed by the principals' unawareness of their superintendent's weaknesses in areas that were critical to the superintendency position . While only two superintendents acknowledged having problems in critical areas such as school finance and law, it was noted that their principals were unable to cite any weaknesses. In addition to effectively capitalizing upon their strengths, superintendents were also able to proceed discreetly with self-improvement plans in their areas of inadequacy while maintaining the over-all confidence of their employees.

Another approach to the superintendents' process of compensating for weaknesses was the use of delegation. All superintendents were perceived by their principal to have developed effective procedures for identifying well-qualified individuals to accomplish particular tasks that the superintendent was unable to perform, due either to a lack of time or skill. The superintendents reported that upon selecting a person knowledgeable in an area in which they lacked expertise, they often learned from the individual. Such use of delegation served to not only efficiently accomplish tasks that were important to meeting district goals, but provided superintendents with opportunities to become better informed and skillful individuals.

Recommendations

Several recommendations, based upon the results of this study, are presented to superintendents regarding the use of the leadership strategies of vision, communication of culture, trust, and self-deployment.

1. Develop a district vision that provides the direction and focus needed for accomplishing the goals that lead to a desired future state.
2. Include representation from all stakeholders in the formulation of the district vision.
3. Establish clear lines of communication with employees on all levels to ensure that they are well-informed of progress and to provide accurate feedback regarding the need for change and revision.
4. Provide the support necessary to take action on initiating the changes indicated through feedback systems.
5. Identify and emphasize to employees the acceptable behaviors that lead to accomplishment of the vision goals.
6. Conduct periodic assessments of staff training programs to determine whether they are congruent with the district culture.
7. Reward employee behaviors that reinforce the vision as a means of instilling and promoting the culture.
8. Grant performance rewards only when offered with conviction and for perceived merit.
9. Maintain a high level of visibility in the district to model desired behaviors.
10. Participate in activities that provide opportunities to demonstrate a total commitment to the vision.
11. Establish a system of regular feedback to employees on the expectations and progress in meeting the district vision.

12. Follow through on all promises and commitments. Never leave a situation unresolved.
13. Identify personal strengths and capitalize upon them to advance the district vision.
14. Minimize areas of personal weakness by developing new skills and/or by delegating responsibilities and tasks to experts.

Additional to the above recommendations presented for superintendents, are the following recommendations to researchers for future study.

1. Study the relationship of size and wealth of a district to determine if these variables influence the superintendent's use of the four leadership strategies presented in this study.
2. Increase the population to be studied by using a statewide or national sample of school districts. Continue use of the interview method for collecting data that provides in-depth responses to questions.
3. Include the perceptions of other district stakeholders (i.e. teachers, non-certified staff, parents, etc.) to study the superintendent's use of the four leadership strategies.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS

APPENDIX A

Dear

As per our telephone conversation on (Date), I am writing to confirm our appointment on (Date and Time). I am most pleased that you have agreed to be interviewed at this time.

As you may recall from our conversation, I am a doctoral candidate at Loyola University. My dissertation involves a study analyzing leadership strategies of superintendents in the areas of vision, communication of culture, trust, and self-deployment. The study is being conducted with the support and direction of my dissertation advisor, Dr. Max Bailey, professor at Loyola University.

A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed to familiarize you with the instrument. I would also appreciate your help in placing me in contact with one of your principals so that I may interview him or her using the same questionnaire, in accordance with the procedures I have established for my study. Please be aware that I will be using a tape recorder to assist me in transcribing the interview results. All participating superintendents and principals will remain anonymous, although the outcome of the study will be shared with participants if they so desire.

Please accept my gratitude for your time and assistance in the process of completing my doctoral study.

Sincerely,

Edward F. Aksamit

Enc.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

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INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

VISION

1. Are you able to state the district's vision?

2. Was there employee input into the formulation of the vision?

3. Are procedures employed to maintain contact with all levels of employees for the purpose of monitoring the impact and progress of the vision? If so, what are the procedures?

4. Are the major strengths of the district emphasized to promote the vision? What are they and how are they used?

5. Are procedures provided for feedback regarding the vision? If so, what are they?

6. What procedures are provided for change and modification of the vision within the district?

7. How is momentum for the vision maintained?

COMMUNICATION OF CULTURE

1. Have procedures been developed to ensure that all employees know and understand appropriate manners, ideas, and behaviors that promote the vision? If so, what are they?

2. Have procedures been established to promote change? If so, what are they?

3. Are there sanctioning procedures that foster and reinforce desired behaviors?

4. Have procedures been established to attract and keep effective employees?

5. Do you take an active part in fostering change?

TRUST

1. What procedures do you employ to present your commitment to the vision?

2. Are you visible? Do you have personal contact with employees?

3. Do you share information pertaining to expectations and progress with employees? If so, how?

4. Do you trust the input from your employees?

5. Do you follow through on promises and commitments?

6. Do you generate an expertise that instills trust in your employees? If so, how?

SELF-DEPLOYMENT

1. Have you developed provisions to improve your personal skills needed to benefit the vision?

2. Have you emphasized your strengths to further the accomplishments of the district?

3. Have you compensated for areas of weakness?

4. Is "delegation" employed to use employees most effectively for the good of the district?

5. Do you provide opportunities to create, develop, and nurture future leaders?

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Edward F. Aksamit has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Max Bailey, Director
Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Loyola University of Chicago

Dr. Edward Rancic
Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Loyola University of Chicago

Dr. Howard Smucker
Assistant Professor, Department of Education
Aurora University

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

_____ _____

Date Director's Signature